

AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL RESULTS
2000 - 2009

Compiled by Doug.Butcher

**Following my previous efforts,
I was asked to present something more modern,
please find my research into the 2000's**

**This is an interim issue due to the restrictions caused by
the Covid-19 virus that closed most avenues of research.**

Full Internationals shown as **BOLD**

2000					
Date	Place	Teams		Score	Tournament
09-Feb	Valparaiso	Chile	Australia	2-1	Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso
12-Feb	Valparaiso, Chile	Australia	Slovakia	0-0	Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso
15-Feb	Valparaiso, Chile	Australia	Bulgaria	1-1	Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso
23-Feb	Budapest	Hungary	Australia	0-3	
29-Mar	Teplice	Czech Republic	Australia	3-1	
09-Jun	Sydney	Australia	Paraguay	0-0	
12-Jun	Brisbane	Australia	Paraguay	0-0	
15-Jun	Melbourne	Australia	Paraguay	2-1	
19-Jun	Papeete, Tahiti	Australia	Cook Islands	17-0	Oceania Nations Cup, 1st. Round
23-Jun	Papeete, Tahiti	Australia	Solomon Islands	6-0	Oceania Nations Cup, 1st. Round
25-Jun	Papeete, Tahiti	Australia	Vanuatu	1-0	Oceania Nations Cup, Semi-final
28-Jun	Papeete, Tahiti	Australia	New Zealand	2-0	Oceania Nations Cup, Final
04-Oct	Dubai	Kuwait	Australia	0-1	LG Cup / Friendship Tournament
07-Oct	Dubai	Korea Republic (South Korea)	Australia	4-2	LG Cup / Friendship Tournament
15-Nov	Glasgow	Scotland	Australia	0-2	

2001					
Date	Place	Teams		Score	Tournament
28-Feb	Bogota	Colombia	Australia	3-2	
09-Apr	Coffs Harbour	Australia	Tonga	22-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1
11-Apr	Coffs Harbour	Australia	American Samoa	31-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1
14-Apr	Coffs Harbour	Australia	Fiji	2-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1
16-Apr	Coffs Harbour	Australia	Samoa	11-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1
30-May	Suwon, South Korea	Mexico	Australia	0-2	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
01-Jun	Daegu, South Korea	France	Australia	0-1	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
03-Jun	Suwon	Korea Republic (South Korea)	Australia	1-0	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
07-Jun	Yokohama	Japan	Australia	1-0	Confederations Cup, Semi-final
09-Jun	Ulsan, South Korea	Brazil	Australia	0-1	Confederations Cup, 3rd-4th Play-off
20-Jun	Wellington	New Zealand	Australia	0-2	World Cup, Qualifying Round
24-Jun	Sydney	Australia	New Zealand	4-1	World Cup, Qualifying Round
15-Aug	Ecopa	Japan	Australia	3-0	AFC/OFC Challenge Cup
11-Nov	Melbourne	Australia	France	1-1	
20-Nov	Melbourne	Australia	Uruguay	1-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round
25-Nov	Montevideo	Uruguay	Australia	3-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round

2002						
Date	Place	Teams		Score		Tournament
05-Jun	Sydney	Manly-Warringah Dolphins	Australia	0-4		
??-Jun	Sydney	Rockdale City Suns	Australia	0-1		
21-Jun	Sydney	Sutherland Select XI	Australia	0-4		
??-Jun	Sydney	?????	Australia	????		
??-Jun	Sydney	?????	Australia	????		
06-Jul	Auckland, NZ	Australia	Vanuatu	2-0		Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A
08-Jul	Auckland, NZ	Australia	New Caledonia	11-0		Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A
10-Jul	Auckland, NZ	Australia	Fiji	8-0		Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A
12-Jul	Auckland, NZ	Australia	Tahiti	2-1		Oceania Cup, Semi-final
14-Jul	Auckland	New Zealand	Australia	1-0		Oceania Cup, Final

2003						
Date	Place	Teams		Score		Tournament
12-Feb	London	England	Australia	1-3		
19-Aug	Dublin	Republic of Ireland	Australia	2-1		
07-Sep	Reading, England	Jamaica	Australia	1-2		
16-Nov	Joondalup	Australian XI	Iraq	0-1		World Peace Game trophy

2004						
Date	Place	Teams		Score		Tournament
18-Feb	Caracus	Venezuela	Australia	1-1		
30-Mar	London, England	South Africa	Australia	0-1		
21-May	Sydney	Australia	Turkey	1-3		Freedom and Friendship Cup
24-May	Melbourne	Australia	Turkey	0-1		Freedom and Friendship Cup
29-May	Adelaide	Australia	New Zealand	1-0		OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone
31-May	Adelaide	Australia	Tahiti	9-0		OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone
02-Jun	Adelaide	Australia	Fiji	6-1		OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone
04-Jun	Adelaide	Australia	Vanuatu	3-0		OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone
06-Jun	Adelaide	Australia	Solomon Islands	2-2		OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone
09-Oct	Honiara	Solomon Islands	Australia	1-5		OFC Nations Cup final - 1st.Leg
12-Oct	Sydney	Australia	Solomon Islands	6-0		OFC Nations Cup final - 2nd.Leg
16-Nov	London, England	Norway	Australia	2-2		

2005					
Date	Place	Teams		Score	Tournament
09-Feb	Durban	South Africa	Australia	1-1	
26-Mar	Sydney	Australia	Iraq	2-1	Powerade Series
29-Mar	Perth	Australia	Indonesia	3-0	Powerade Series
09-Jun	London, England	New Zealand	Australia	0-1	
15-Jun	Frankfurt	Germany	Australia	4-3	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
18-Jun	Nuremberg, Germany	Argentina	Australia	4-2	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
21-Jun	Leipzig, Germany	Tunisia	Australia	2-0	Confederations Cup, 1st. Round
03-Aug	Sydney	Australia	Solomon Islands	7-0	World Cup Qualifying Round, Group Play-off 1st.Leg, Oceanian Zone
06-Aug	Honiara	Solomon Islands	Australia	1-2	World Cup Qualifying Round, Group Play-off 2nd.Leg, Oceanian Zone
09-Oct	London, England	Jamaica	Australia	0-5	
12-Nov	Montevideo	Uruguay	Australia	1-0	World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania-South America play-off, 1st. Leg
16-Nov	Sydney	Australia	Uruguay	1-0	aggregate 1-1 Australia won 4-2 penalties World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania-South America play-off, 2nd. Leg

2006					
Date	Place	Teams		Score	Tournament
22-Feb	Riffa	Bahrain	Australia	1-3	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round
25-May	Melbourne	Australia	Greece	1-0	
02-Jun	Kloetinge	V.V.Kloetinge (Netherlands)	Australia	1-8	
04-Jun	Rotterdam	Netherlands	Australia	1-1	
07-Jun	Ulm, Germany	Liechtenstein	Australia	1-3	
12-Jun	Kaiserslautern, Germany	Japan	Australia	1-3	World Cup Finals, 1st. round
18-Jun	Munich, Germany	Brazil	Australia	2-0	World Cup Finals, 1st. round
22-Jun	Stuttgart, Germany	Croatia	Australia	2-2	World Cup Finals, 1st. round
26-Jun	Kaiserslautern, Germany	Italy	Australia	1-0	World Cup Finals, 2nd. round
16-Aug	Sydney	Australia	Kuwait	2-0	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round
06-Sep	Kuwait City	Kuwait	Australia	2-0	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round
07-Oct	Brisbane	Australia	Paraguay	1-1	
11-Oct	Sydney	Australia	Bahrain	2-0	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round
14-Nov	London, England	Ghana	Australia	1-1	

2007						
Date	Place	Teams		Score		Tournament
06-Feb	London, England	Denmark	Australia	3-1		
24-Mar	Guangzhou	People's Republic of China	Australia	0-2		
02-Jun	Sydney	Australia	Uruguay	1-2		
30-Jun	Singapore	Singapore	Australia	0-3		
01-Jul	Singapore	Singapore U-23	Australia	0-0	70 minute duration	
03-Jul	Singapore	Australia 'A'	Australia 'B'	1-3	60 minute duration	
08-Jul	Bangkok, Thailand	Oman	Australia	1-1		Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round
13-Jul	Bangkok, Thailand	Iraq	Australia	3-1		Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round
16-Jul	Bangkok	Thailand	Australia	0-4		Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round
21-Jul	Hanoi, Vietnam	Japan	Australia	1-1	Japan won 4-3 penalties	Asian Cup Finals, Quarter Final
11-Sep	Melbourne	Australia	Argentina	0-1		
16-Nov	London, England	Nigeria	Australia	0-1		

2008						
Date	Place	Teams		Score		Tournament
02-Feb	Melbourne	Melbourne Victory	Australia	1-1		
06-Feb	Melbourne	Australia	Qatar	3-0		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
22-Mar	Singapore	Singapore	Australia	0-0		
26-Mar	Kunming	People's Republic of China	Australia	0-0		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
23-May	Sydney	Australia	Ghana	1-0		
01-Jun	Brisbane	Australia	Iraq	1-0		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
07-Jun	Dubai, UAE	Iraq	Australia	1-0		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
14-Jun	Doha	Qatar	Australia	1-3		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
22-Jun	Sydney	Australia	People's Republic of China	0-1		World Cup 3rd.Qualifying round - Asian zone
19-Aug	London, England	South Africa	Australia	2-2		
06-Sep	Eindhoven	Netherlands	Australia	1-2		
10-Sep	Tashkent	Uzbekistan	Australia	0-1		World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
15-Oct	Brisbane	Australia	Qatar	4-0		World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
19-Nov	Riffa	Bahrain	Australia	0-1		World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone

2009					
Date	Place	Teams		Score	Tournament
28-Jan	Jakarta	Indonesia	Australia	0-0	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B
11-Feb	Yokohama	Japan	Australia	0-0	World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
5-Mar	Canberra	Australia	Kuwait	0-1	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B
1-Apr	Sydney	Australia	Uzbekistan	2-0	World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
6-Jun	Doha	Qatar	Australia	0-0	World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
10-Jun	Sydney	Australia	Bahrain	2-0	World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
17-Jun	Melbourne	Australia	Japan	2-1	World Cup 4th.Qualifying round - Asian zone
12-Aug	Limerick	Republic of Ireland	Australia	0-3	
5-Sep	Seoul	Korea Republic (South Korea)	Australia	3-1	
10-Oct	Sydney	Australia	The Netherlands	0-0	
14-Oct	Melbourne	Australia	Oman	1-0	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B
14-Nov	Muscat	Oman	Australia	1-2	Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B

2000

Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
9th. February 2000,			Estadio Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile								9000		
Chile..2 v. Australia..1													
half time, Chile..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Marcelo Antonio Ramirez Gormaz					GK	Mark Schwarzer					
	DF	Jorge Francisco Vargas Palacios					DF	Luke Casserly					
	DF	Miguel Ramirez Pérez				61	DF	Hayden Foxe					
	MF	Nelson Rodrigo Parraguez Riveros					DF	Shaun Murphy					
	MF	Francisco Javier Fernández Torrejon					DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto					67
	MF	Mauricio Fernando Aros Bahamóndez					MF	Jason van Blerk				65	
	MF	Clárence Williams Acuña Donoso					MF	Craig Foster					61
	MF	Marco Antonio Villaseca Cabezas					MF	Josip Skoko					
	MF	José Luis "Coto" Sierra Pando				81	MF	Paul Okon (c)					
	FW	Mario Antonio "Osito" Nuñez Villarroel				61*	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica	15				80
	FW	Pedro Alejandro González Vera	10			72	FW	Paul Agostino					65
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Rodrigo Fabián Nuñez Ortiz				61	MF	Kasey Wehrman					61
	MF	Raúl Alejandro Palacios Gamboa				81	DF	Stephen Laybutt					67
	FW	Julio Brian Gutiérrez González				61*	FW	David Zdrilic					65
	FW	Reinaldo Marcelino Navia Amador	92(pk)			72	DF	Scott Chipperfield					80
Team Coach		Nelson Bonifacio Acosta López					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Eduardo Humberto Gamboa Latourniere (Chile)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia and reproduced in the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 970, 15/2/2000, page 3

Australia went down 2-1 to host nation Chile, in the first round of matches of the Four Nation Tournament in Valparaiso, Chile.

Steve Corica levelled the score at 1-1 in the 15th minute of the game after Chile took the lead at the fifth minute mark, but a late penalty secured the points for the home team.

The LG Socceroos also had defender Jason van Blerk sent off 20 minutes from full-time.

LG Socceroos team line-up: Mark Schwarzer, Shaun Murphy, Jason van Blerk, Luke Casserly, Hayden Foxe, Paul Okon (c), Josip Skoko, Craig Foster (Kasey Wehrman 65), Danny Tiatto (Stephen Laybutt 75),

Steve Corica (Scott Chipperfield 83), Paul Agostino (David Zdrilic 70).

Yellow Cards: Paul Okon 30, Craig Foster 60, Paul Agostino 70, Mark Schwarzer 89.

Red Card: Jason van Blerk 68.

Injuries: Danny Tiatto (swollen achilles).

Venue: Valparaiso, Chile.

Crowd: 12,000 (circa).

Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
12th. February 2000,			Estadio Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile									3500	
Slovakia..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Slovakia..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Kamil Susko						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
	DF	Jozef Valachovič						DF	Luke Casserly				
	DF	Jaroslav Hrabal						DF	Hayden Foxe				
	DF	Milan Timko						DF	Shaun Murphy				
	DF	Tibor Zátek				90		DF	Stephen Laybutt				
	DF	Igor Bališ						DF	Scott Chipperfield				82
	DF	Ondrej Šmelko						MF	Kasey Wehrman				72
	MF	Vladislav Zvara						MF	Paul Okon				
	MF	Vladimir Janočko				83		MF	Josip Skoko				
	MF	Marek Ujlaky				43		MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				
	FW	Tibor Jančula						FW	David Zdrilic				
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	František Hadviger				90		MF	Bradley Maloney				72
	DF	Vladimir Leitner				83		FW	Pablo Cardozo				82
	FW	Vladimir Kozuch				43							
Team Coach		Jozef Adamec					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Luis Mariano Peña Catalán (Chile)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Mike Cockerill

While Australia still await their first win under new coach Frank Farina, after a scoreless draw against Slovakia in the second match of the four-team tournament in Chile, signs exist that they are starting to reflect his character.

The Socceroos had the better of a frenetic contest played on a tight, uneven pitch at Valparaiso on Saturday, made harder by a howling southerly wind blowing down the ground.

Slovakia, who brought an entire home-based squad to South America, were content to put players behind the ball and rely on the counter-attack - a tactic which made Socceroo goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer virtually redundant, but also served to frustrate an Australian side controlling possession.

Denied time and space by the willing Slovaks, it was a constant struggle for Australia to get the ball into areas where strikers Steve Corica and David Zdrilic could be effective. Zdrilic, in particular, suffered without the sort of service that makes his direct style so threatening. Despite the result, Farina was delighted with the performance. "I thought we dominated from start to finish, it's just unfortunate we couldn't put our one or two chances away," he said. "The ball just didn't want to fall for us in the box. I'm disappointed we didn't win because we were the only team trying to play out there, but psychologically it's important that we at least got something out of the game. I thought we played well." Significantly, perhaps, it was the manner in which Australia played without the ball which was the most telling insight of the match. A strong opinion exists in the game that during the past decade, the Socceroos sacrificed too much of their traditional strengths - high workrate and physical commitment - in trying to prove themselves skilful. Indeed, many observers think this is what cost Australia qualification for the most recent World Cup in the deciding final 20 minutes against Iran. Whatever the case, Farina - a player who never shirked a contest - clearly intends to re-ignite the team's physical edge. This is evident not only in the evolving style - including discarding the sweeper system - but also in selection of personnel. The renaissance of Danny Tiatto perhaps encapsulates this change best, for he is a player who is tough and skilful. And camp morale indicates the players are delighted with this approach.

As it happened, Tiatto was sidelined against Slovakia through a corked quadricep, his place taken by the versatile Scott Chipperfield, who was encouraged to push through the middle as often as possible.

At left fullback, Stephen Laybutt replaced the suspended Jason van Blerk, while up front, Zdrilic came in for Paul Agostino, and on the right side of midfield, Kasey Wehrman replaced injured Craig Foster, as four changes were made to the side which lost the opening match against Chile. In the context of a rugged game played at a furious pace, the best player on the park was midfielder Josip Skoko, whose crunching tackles - one put Slovakian striker Marek Ujlaky out of the game - underpinned the Australian performance. Skoko is building an unbeatable case for selection when the World Cup campaign gets under way next year. Next to Skoko, skipper Paul Okon - a player whose close skill and vision has always been his forte - also savoured an enforcer role. Leadership is clearly having an effect on Okon, who, after four injury-hit years, is desperate to make up for lost time on the international stage.

Overall, there wasn't a poor performer in green and gold - the bench included. After all, the two best strikes came in the final flurry from substitute Pablo Cardozo, who almost marked his debut with a goal but was twice denied by Slovak goalkeeper Ivan Trabauk. Zdrilic also hit the side netting from a Corica corner as the Socceroos pushed to conquer an inferior team.

Perhaps the only criticism is that Australia still lack a dead-ball specialist to open packed defences, such as Slovakia's. Farina's decision to omit Perth Glory striker Con Boutsianis remains a moot point.

The Socceroos will end the tournament against Bulgaria on Tuesday night, but will have to get by without Skoko and Okon. Skoko must return to Belgium for a medical test to complete his transfer from Hajduk Split to Genk and be registered for next weekend. Farina said he was "grateful" that the player had made himself available for two games, against the wishes of his new employers.

Okon has to return to Italy for personal reasons, and again Farina has no complaints about his early departure. Assistant coach Graham Arnold is also leaving before the Bulgaria match, returning to Sydney to try to sort out the problems at his national league club, Northern Spirit, before rejoining the Socceroos in Hungary next week.

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 970, 15/2/2000, page 3

Australia fought out a 0-0 draw with Slovakia, in the second round of matches of the Four Nation Soccer Tournament being played in Valparaiso, Chile.

The LG Socceroos dominated the match which was played in blustery conditions, but were unable to put the finishing touch on several scoring opportunities.

Coach Frank Farina was happy with the team's performance, coming on the heels of the tough game against Chile just three days earlier.

"I was very pleased with the way we played out there today, and I suppose the only thing that I'm disappointed with is that we didn't get the win, because I really felt we deserved it to be honest."

"Overall we dominated the game, the Slovaks virtually sat behind the ball for the entire match and their game plan seemed to be to try and catch us on the break, which never eventuated."

"Towards the end of the game we had 2-3 really good chances. Pablo Cardozo had a great strike which the keeper parried for a corner and then another one two minutes later which just hit the keeper's arm."

"The conditions were particularly windy and that had its bearing on the game, but I'm really happy with the way the boys backed up."

LG Socceroos team line-up: Mark Schwarzer, Shaun Murphy, Stephen Laybutt, Luke Casserly, Hayden Foxe, Paul Okon (c), Josip Skoko, Kasey Wehrman (Brad Maloney 71), Scott Chipperfield (Pablo Cardozo 80), Steve Corica, David Zdrilic.

Yellow Cards: Shaun Murphy 5, Steve Corica 14.

Venue: Valparaiso, Chile.

Copa Ciudad de Valparaiso													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
15th. February 2000,			Estadio Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile								8000		
Bulgaria..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Bulgaria..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Zdravko Stoyanov Zdravkov						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
	DF	Georgi Slavev Markov "Börner Grater"						DF	Luke Casserly				
	DF	Veselin Branimirov Atanasov						DF	Stephen Laybutt				
	DF	Ivaylo Rumenov Petkov						DF	Shaun Murphy				
	MF	Biser Ivanov						DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				
	MF	Georgi Ivanov Peev				46		MF	Jason van Blerk				
	MF	Stiliyan Alyoshev Petrov "Stan"				70		MF	Bradley Maloney				
	MF	Stanimir Kolev Stoilov "Murray"				62		MF	Craig Foster				
	MF	Aleksandar "Alex" Yordanov Aleksandrov						MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				72
	FW	Svetoslav Todorov				89		FW	Paul Agostino	1			75
	FW	Dimitar Ivanov Berbatov "Berba"				46*		FW	Pablo Cardozo				57
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Daniel Borimirov Borisov				46		DF	Matthew Horsley				72
	FW	Georgi Aleksandrov Ivanov "Gonzo"				70		DF	Scott Chipperfield				75
	MF	Krasimir Chomakov "Kradi"				62		FW	David Zdrilic				57
	DF	Veselin Mihaylov Velikov				89							
	FW	Martin Petyov Petrov				46*							
Team Coach		Stoycho Mladenov					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Rubén Marcos Selman (Chile)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has drawn 1-1 with Bulgaria, in its final round match of the Four Nations Soccer Tournament being played in Valparaiso, Chile

The LG Socceroos took the lead within the first minute of the game, Paul Agostino latching onto a Pablo Cardozo cross and volleying the ball into the back of the net.

Australia continued to dominate the match with Agostino, Cardozo and Steve Corica all having shots saved, before Bulgaria drew back the equalizer just two minutes from full time.

While obviously disappointed with the final outcome, coach Frank Farina is optimistic about the continued progress of his team. "Once again I felt we deserved to win the game, and its a difficult result to swallow because we dominated for so long and were ahead for so much of it, but by the same token, we didn't score the second goal," he said after the match. "We went really close, with with Paul Agostino having two attempts cleared off the line, as well as a number of other chances, so we had our opportunities to wrap the match up. It's always dangerous at 1-0, it's really disappointing to lose it right at the death, but in the end you have to score goals to win games. Still I'm overall very happy with the way the team has developed through this tournament, we've gotten better with each game and have always looked promising. Playing three games in seven days is always difficult, but I've had the opportunity to look at a variety of different players in different positions, I've felt we've gone from strength to strength, and we'll continue to improve."

The final standings were:-

Chile	Win..2	Draw..0	Lose..1	GF..5	GA..5	Pts. 6
Slovakia	Win..1	Draw..1	Lose..1	GF..2	GA..1	Pts. 4
Bulgaria	Win..1	Draw..1	Lose..1	GF..4	GA..4	Pts. 4
Australia	Win..0	Draw..2	Lose..1	GF..2	GA..3	Pts. 2

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
23rd. February 2000,			Üllői úti Stadion, Budapest, Hungary									14000	
Hungary..0 v. Australia..3													
half time, Hungary..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Gábor Babos						GK	Mark Bosnich				
	DF	János Hrutka						DF	Kevin Muscat				
	DF	Tamás Bódog						DF	Craig Moore	89			
	DF	János Mátyus						DF	Paul Okon				
	DF	Vilmos Sebök				71		DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
	MF	Gábor Bukrán						DF	Stephen Laybutt	12			
	MF	Gábor Zavadzsky				58		DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				77
	MF	Miklós Lendvai						MF	Josip Skoko	72			
	MF	Ottó Vincze						MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				46
	FW	László Klausz						MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				64
	FW	Tamás Nagy						FW	Mark Viduka				
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Dragóner Attila				71		FW	Paul Agostino				46
	MF	Tibor Dombi				58		MF	Craig Foster				64
								DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				77
Team Coach							Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager		Bertalan Bicskei					Team Manager						
Referee		Dietmar Drabek (Austria)											
Assistant Referee 1		Herbert Krenn (Austria)											
Assistant Referee 2		H.Denthaner (Austria)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has beaten Hungary 3-0 in Budapest this morning, to give LG Socceroos Coach Frank Farina his first victory at the helm of the Senior National Team.

Parramatta Power's Stephen Laybutt put the Australians on the board in the 12th minute, volleying in the opener after the LG Socceroos had enjoyed a sustained period of pressure on the Hungarian goal.

The Hungarians came closest to an equaliser in the 34th minute when Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich was beaten, but the home side kept out with the ball cannoning off the crossbar.

The LG Socceroos made it 2-nil in the 72nd minute, Mark Viduka holding the ball up and delivering a cross which Josip Skoko eventually put into the back of the net.

The final blow was dealt by Craig Moore in extra time, the defender getting himself into space and latching onto a cross from Stan Lazaridia to volley home Australia's third of the game.

"The boys did exceptionally well out there today, and it was an extremely solid performance all round," said Farina after the match. "All in all you couldn't pick out one player, it was a solid performance by the team on the night, right from the back four of Vidmar, Laybutt, Moore and Muscat, through Okon marshalling the midfield and up to Viduka and Kewell up front. "I think that the score-line was quite deserved, I'm pleased that we've been able to continue on with the good form that we had in Chile, and I'd have to be kidding if I didn't feel a little bit of relief with my first win. I was also really pleased with the way the replacements fitted so well into the game plan."

"Paul Agostino came on at half-time after Harry had taken a couple of knocks to his achilles, and his partnership with Viduka worked well up front, and I was also really happy with the contribution from Craig Foster and Stan Lazaridis," he added.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
29th. February 2000,			Stadion Na Stínadlech, Teplice, Czech Republic									9820	
Czech Republic..3 v. Australia..1													
half time, Czech Republic..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Jaromir Blažek						GK	Zeljko Kalac				
	DF	Karel Rada						DF	Kevin Muscat		5		69
	DF	Milan Fukal	10					DF	Shaun Murphy				
	DF	Petr Gabriel				38		DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	MF	Pavel Nedvěd						DF	Jason van Blerk		52		78
	MF	Jiří Němec						DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	MF	Tomáš Rosický				76		DF	Paul Okon (c)				
	MF	Martin Čížek				59		MF	Josip Skoko				
	MF	Pavel Verbiř				59*		MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				55
	FW	Karel Poborský		61		73		FW	Mark Viduka				
	FW	Jan Koller	53					FW	Paul Agostino				69*
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Petr Vičec				38		DF	Luke Casserly				69
	MF	Radek Bejbl				73		MF	Richard Mark Johnson				78
	FW	René Wagner				76		MF	Craig Foster	88			55
	FW	Vratislav Lokvenc				59		FW	Clayton Zane				69*
	MF	Ivo Ulich	66			59*							
Team Coach		Jozef Chovanec					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Vladimír Hříňák (Slovenia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Marian Ruzbarsky (Slovenia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Vlastislav Laskovsky (Slovenia)											

match report from Soccer Australia

After sustained pressure in the opening moments of the first half by the home side, the LG Socceroos conceded the first goal of the match in the 10th minute, failing to clear a corner, with the goal headed in by Milan Fukal.

Striker Mark Viduka had the LG Socceroos' best chance to even the scores in the first half, beating several defenders in a solo run in the 30th minute, before his shot was stopped by the goalkeeper.

Midfielder Josip Skoko almost levelled the scores just 6 minutes into the second half, his shot from outside of the box parried over the bar by the Czech keeper, but the Australians fell further behind just a couple of minutes later, Jan Koller scoring his 12th goal from 12 games after a successful counter attack.

The Czech Republic's third goal was scored in the 66th minute after another counter attack, which was finished off by Ivo Ulich, while Australias consolation goal came in the dying minutes of the game, Craig Foster posting his name on the scoreboard after the Czech defence failed to clear a corner.

Frank Farina said "We got off to a bit of a bad start, where in the initial 10-15 minutes we gave away some silly free kicks, gave away possession in bad areas, and got punished for it by having the goal scored against us just 10 minutes in. After that the boys settled and played really well for the last 20 minutes or so of the first half, we had our chances, and we went into the second half on a positive note. Their second goal came from the chances we were creating at the other end, it came on the break and showed a bit of naivety on our behalf, with too many players forward, which caught us on the quick break. That was also the story of the third goal, a chance to Mark Viduka saw them catch us on the break again, we should have sat someone back, and we didn't. Overall I thought the boys played quite well, but the bottom line is that they caught us out twice, we got caught out on a couple of occasions and we paid for it, but we'll also learn from it."

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 977, 4/4/2000, page 2

Australia went down 3-1 to the world number two ranked Czech Republic, in a friendly in Teplice last week.

After sustained pressure in the opening moments of the first half by the home side, Australia conceded the first goal of the match in the 10th minute, failing to clear a corner, with the goal headed in by Milan Fukal.

Striker Mark Viduka had the LG Socceroos best chance to even the scores in the first half, beating several defenders in a solo run in the 30th minute, before his shot was stopped by the goalkeeper.

Midfielder Josip Skoko almost levelled the scores just six minutes of the second half, his shot from outside the box parried over the bar by the Czech keeper, but the Australians fell further behind just a couple of minutes later, Belgium based Jan Koller scoring his 12th goal from 12 games after a successful counter attack.

The Czech Republic's third goal was scored in the 66th minute after another counter-attack, which was finished off by Ivo Ulich, while Australia's consolation goal came in the dying minutes of the game. Craig Foster posting his name on the score-sheet, after the Czech defence failed to clear a corner.

Australian Coach Frank Farina conceded defeat. "We got off to a bit of a bad start, where in the initial 10 to 15 minutes, we gave away some silly free kicks, gave away possession in bad areas, and got punished for it by having the goal scored against us just 10 minutes in.

"After that, the boys settled and played really well for the last 20 minutes or so of the first half, we had our chances, and we went into the second half on a positive note."

"Overall, I thought the boys played quite well, but the bottom line is that they caught us out twice - we got caught on a couple of occasions and we paid for it but we'll also learn from it."

CZECH REPUBLIC 3 (Milan Fukal 10, Jan Koller 53, Ivo Ulich 66) AUSTRALIA 1 (Craig Foster 88).

LG Socceroo Line-up: Zeljko Kalac (gk), Kevin Muscat (Luke Casserly 69), Shaun Murphy, Tony Popovic, Jason van Blerk (Richard Johnson 78), Stan Lazaridis, Paul Okon (c), Josip Skoko, Steve Corica (Craig Foster 55), Mark Viduka, Paul Agostino (Clayton Zane 69).

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. June 2000,			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, Sydney, New South Wales									10000	
Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Zeljko Kalac						GK	José Luis Félix Chilavert González				
	DF	Kevin Muscat						DF	Néstor Daniel Isasi Guillén				
	DF	Shaun Murphy						DF	Delio César Toledo Rodas				84
	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic						DF	Dario Raúl Caballero				
	DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				74		DF	Nelson Fabián Zelaya Ramírez				
	DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis						DF	Nery Ramón Ortiz				83
	DF	Paul Okon						MF	Estanislao Struway Samaniego "Tani"				
	MF	Craig Foster				78		MF	Raúl Alberto Arviñagaldez				53
	MF	Brett Emerton						MF	Walter David Ávalos Amarilla				
	FW	David Zdrilic						MF	Edgar Arnulfo Robles				69
	FW	Paul Agostino				64		FW	Miguel Cáceres Báez				64
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Simon Colosimo				74			Juan Cardozo				84
	MF	Aurelio Vidmar				78		MF	Tomás Alberto González Vera				53
	FW	Clayton Zane				64		FW	Roland Gaona Pascottini				83
								MF	Isidro Ramón Candia				69
								FW	Julio Cesar Colman Samaniego				64
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Sergio Markarián				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Simon Micallef (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 1		John Bowdler (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Alex Spiroski (Australia)											

match report from Soccer Australia

The LG Socceroos have fought out a 0-0 draw with Paraguay at the Sydney Football Stadium, in the opening match of the three-game series.

After a tentative start, the Australians dominated much of the game, with the best chance of the first half falling to striker David Zdrilic, whose header was tipped over the bar by Paraguayan keeper and captain, Jose Luis Chilavert.

In the second half, Zdrilic had another header saved, while replacement Clayton Zane netted the ball in extra time, only to have the goal ruled off-side.

LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina was happy with his teams performance, giving due consideration to the fact that many of the side haven't played for up to a month. "We'll obviously get better as the series goes on, but I was quite pleased with the overall effort put in by the boys tonight," he said after the game. "If I had to single individuals out, I think Zdrilic, (Brett) Emerton and (Stan) Lazaridis worked very hard, but I really felt it was a good team effort. Everyone in the squad will be given an opportunity to play in this series, and thats the reason behind having a big squad, hopefully everyone will stand up and be counted, and make it difficult for me to pick my final squad for Tahiti."

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 987, 13/6/2000, page 2

Australia and Paraguay played out a 0-0 draw in a very physical encounter at the Sydney Football Stadium on Friday night.

In a match that saw no fewer than seven yellow cards, the Socceroos had the pick of the chances, and were unlucky not to win after a last minute deflection into the back of the net was ruled offside.

Paraguayan captain Jose Luis Chilavert, obviously unhappy with Australia's physical style, thought the Australian players, 'seemed to be seeing red.'

"They use intimidating tactics and all their players should have had red cards. The next game there should be a doping test after the game. They're a good team, but non-disciplined play will cost them a lot with international referees," he said.

Socceroos coach Frank Farina was pleased with his team's performance against a 'good side'.

"I was quite pleased to be honest. For a first game we played a very disciplined match, created a number of opportunities and were very unlucky not to score. It was a good all-round solid performance," he said.

A solid performance it may have been, but the Socceroos finishing yet again proved their Achilles heel. The first half saw a very tight match unfold with genuine chances few and far between.

The Socceroos looked most threatening down the flanks of Stan Lazaridis and Brett Emerton, who were penetrating the Paraguayan defence with good effect. Danny Tiatto also had a great game with a typically dogged performance.

A couple of free headers from Craig Foster set pieces presented Shaun Murphy and Paul Agostino with good chances, both failing to find the target.

The Socceroos best move came from David Zdrilic, whose diving header shaved the crossbar. The move started when Paul Agostino played Emerton into space with a cheeky back-heel. Emerton continued his run to the by-line before delivering a low hard cross onto Zdrilic's head.

Paraguay's only genuine chance of the game came in the second half when substitute Tomas Gonzalez latched onto a defence splitting through ball, but under pressure failed to surpass keeper Zeljko Kalac who saved well.

Kalac's opposing number, Chilavert, was a constant source of entertainment taking the Paraguayan free kicks from distance before racing back to cover his goal.

The Socceroos might have won in the last minute when a Paul Okon shot deflected off Clayton Zane into the back of the net, but unfortunately Zane was ruled offside.

Paraguayan coach Sergio Markarian was impressed with the standard of the Socceroos, despite the physicality, and rates Australia's chances of a World Cup 2002 berth a real possibility.

"With the players they do have and the players they didn't have like Viduka, their attacking would be very comparative to the fifth placed South American team," he said.

Venue: Sydney Football Stadium

Crowd: n/a

Referee: S.Micallef.

Yellow Cards: Muscat (AUS) 14, Okon (AUS) 39, Zelaya (PAR) 41, Popovic (AUS) 57, Chilavert (PAR) 57, Avalos (PAR) 65, Zdrilic (AUS) 88.

Teams: Australia - Kalac, Muscat, Murphy, Okon, Popovic, Foster (Vidmar), Tiatto (Colosimo), Lazaridis, Zdrilic, Emerton, Agostino (Zane).

Paraguay: Chilavert, Isasi, Toledo (Cardozo), Caballero, Zelaya, Struway, Aviniagalde (Gonzalez), Ortiz (Gaona), Caceres (Colman), Avalos, Robles (Candia).

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
12th. June 2000,			Brisbane Cricket Ground, Woolloongabba, Brisbane, Queensland									5000	
Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Clint Bolton						GK	José Luis Félix Chilavert González				
	DF	Stephen Laybutt		X				DF	Néstor Daniel Isasi Guillén				61
	DF	Jason van Blerk						DF	Delio César Toledo Rodas				53
	DF	Simon Colosimo				83		DF	Dario Raúl Caballero				
	MF	Andrew Marth						DF	Nelson Fabián Zelaya Ramírez				
	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat						DF	Nery Ramón Ortiz				
	MF	Aurelio Vidmar (c)						MF	Estanislao Struway Samaniego "Tani"				
	MF	Gabriel Mendez		X				MF	Victor Hugo Ortiz González				46*
	FW	Carl Veart						MF	Tomás Alberto González Vera				79
	FW	Clayton Zane						FW	Miguel Cáceres Báez				46
	FW	Pablo Cardozo				67		FW	Roland Gaona Pascottini		X		
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Kevin Muscat				83		DF	Ángel Antar				61
	MF	Brett Emerton				67		DF	Luis Ramón Romero		X		53
								FW	Julio Cesar Colman Samaniego		X		46
								MF	Walter David Avalos Amarilla		X		46*
								MF	Isidro Ramón Candia				79
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Sergio Markarian				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mark Shield (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ben Wilson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Stewart Lockrey (Australia)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia and Paraguay played out their second consecutive nil-all draw, as the three match soccer series between the two countries moved to Brisbane's Gabba ground today.

The LG Socceroos fielded a completely different side from that of last Friday night's opener, but again were unable to find the back of the net, despite having the better of the match. The Australians, led by captain Aurelio Vidmar, kept Paraguayan goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert on his toes again, with midfielder Gabriel Mendez closest to breaking the deadlock with good efforts in both halves from free kicks.

At the other end, Australian goalkeeper Clint Bolton was forced into a one-on-one save in the 75th minute, while the introduction of Brett Emerton in the 67th minute added extra spark to the attack but not the elusive goal.

"Once again I thought the boys held their own out there today, and there can be no question about their commitment and work rate," said LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina after the match. "Clayton Zane was a constant thorn in their side, and Stephen Laybutt and Steve Horvat were particularly strong at the back, but again, I was pleased with the overall commitment shown out on the park, no one had a bad game, I will definitely be looking to use the majority of the squad for Thursday night's final game in Melbourne, before announcing the side that travels to Tahiti on Friday, for the Oceania Nations Cup." Farina concluded.

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 988, 20/6/2000, page 2

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Australia: Clint Bolton (gk), Stephen Laybutt, Jason van Blerk, Simon Colosimo (Kevin Muscat 83), Andrew Marth, Steve Horvat, Aurelio Vidmar, Gabriel Mendez, Carl Veart, Clayton Zane, Pablo Cardozo (Brett Emerton 67).

Paraguay: Jose L. Chilavert (gk), Nestor Isasi (Angel Antar 61), Delio Toledo (Luis Romero 53), Dario Caballero, Nelson Zelaya, Estanislao Struway, Nery Ortiz, Miguel Caceres (Julio Colman 46), Victor Ortiz (Walter Avalos 46), Roland Gaona, Tomas Gonzalez (Isidro Candia 79).

Date & Time				Venue				Weather				Temperature		Attendance	
15th. June 2000,				Olympic Park, Melbourne, Victoria										7500	
Australia..2 v. Paraguay..1															
half time, Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0															
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution		
START LIST															
	GK	Zeljko Kalac					GK	José Luis Félix Chilavert González			X	90+1			
	DF	Kevin Muscat					DF	Néstor Daniel Isasi Guillén							
	DF	Shaun Murphy					DF	Delio César Toledo Rodas					46		
	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					DF	Dario Raúl Caballero							
	DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				66	DF	Nelson Fabián Zelaya Ramírez					65		
	DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					DF	Nery Ramón Ortiz					58		
	DF	Paul Okon (c)					DF	Luis Ramón Romero							
	MF	Craig Foster	47			82	MF	Estanislao Struway Samaniego "Tani"							
	MF	Brett Emerton					MF	Walter David Ávalos Amarilla					58*		
	FW	David Zdrilic	52			66*	FW	Miguel Cáceres Báez	58						
	FW	Paul Agostino					FW	Roland Gaona Pascottini					78		
SUBSTITUTES															
	DF	Scott Chipperfield				66	MF	Edgar Arnulfo Robles					46		
	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				82	DF	Angel Antar					65		
	FW	Clayton Zane				66*	MF	Raúl Alberto Arviñagaldez					58		
							MF	Tomás Alberto González Vera					58*, 90+2		
							GK	Justo Wilmar Villar Viveros					90+2		
							MF	Victor Hugo Ortiz González					78		
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Sergio Markarian						
Team Manager							Team Manager								
Referee		Gerry Connolly (Australia)													
Assistant Referee 1		Michael Parry (Australia)													
Assistant Referee 2		Matthew Cream (Australia)													

match report from Soccer Australia

The LG Socceroos have beaten Paraguay 2-1 in the third and final match of the series, at Melbourne's Olympic Park.

The Australians went on the attack from the opening minute of play, and were unlucky not to go ahead in the 16th minute, when David Zdrilic threaded a through ball to Paul Agostino, whose shot was saved by Paraguayan keeper and captain Jose Luis Chilavert.

The first goal of the series seemed almost certain in the 39th minute when Danny Tiatto was brought down in the box earning Australia a penalty, however the opposition did enough to distract Australian captain Paul Okon, whose spot kick sailed over the bar.

The continued Australian assault finally paid dividends two minutes into the second half, midfielder Craig Foster beating Chilavert with a left-footer to make it 1-0 to the home team.

Zdrilic then made it 2-0 just 5 minutes later after midfielder Brett Emerton had broken down the right and crossed to the striker, whose left footed shot again beat the Paraguayan keeper.

Paraguay pulled one back in the 58th minute, Miguel Cáceres capitalising on a mistake from Australian keeper Zeljko Kalac, however the introduction shortly after of strikers Clayton Zane and Scott Chipperfield kept the attack flowing Australia's way.

In the final minute of play, the ill-tempered feeling which prevailed through the match finally boiled over, Chilavert being handed his second yellow card of the evening, the ensuing melee finally seeing the goalkeeper's exit from the ground, and Australia's hard fought victory.

"The Paraguayans were very solid at the back over the series and tended not to give anything away, but we always knew that when that first goal was scored, the game would open up," said LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina after the game. "The team has steadily improved over the three games, the players have gotten better playing the games as has the combination, we went out to pressurize them and win the ball, and we did just that."

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 988, 20/6/2000, page 2

AUSTRALIA 2 (Craig Foster 47, David Zdrilic 52) PARAGUAY 1 (Miguel Caceres 58).

The LG Socceroos defeated Paraguay 2-1 in the third and final match of the series, at Melbourne's Olympic Park.

The Australians went on the attack from the opening minute of play, and were unlucky not to go ahead in the 16th minute, when David Zdrilic threaded a through ball to Paul Agostino, whose shot was saved by Paraguayan 'keeper and captain Jose Luis Chilavert.

The first goal of the series seemed almost certain in the 39th minute when Danny Tiatto was brought down in the box earning Australia a penalty, however the opposition did enough to distract Australian captain Paul Okon, whose spot kick sailed over the bar.

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"The team has steadily improved over the three games, the players have gotten better playing the games as has the combination, we went out to pressurise them and win the ball, and we did just that."

Australia: Zeljko Kalac (gk), Kevin Muscat, Shaun Murphy, Tony Popovic, Danny Tiatto (Scott Chipperfield 66), Stan Lazaridis, Paul Okon, Craig Foster (Steve Corica 82), Brett Emerton, David Zdrilic (Clayton Zane 66), Paul Agostino.

Paraguay: Jose L. Chilavert (gk), Nestor Isasi, Delio Toledo (Luis Robles 46), Dario Caballero, Nelson Zelaya (Angel Antar 65), Estanislao Struway, Nery Ortiz (Raul Aviniagalde 58), Miguel Caceres, Walter Avalos (Tomas Gonzalez 58, Justo Villar 92), Luis Romero, Roland Gaona (Victor Ortiz 78).

Oceania Nations Cup, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
19th. June 2000, 14.00			Stade de Pater, Papeete, Tahiti									1000	
Cook Islands..0 v. Australia..17													
half time, Cook Islands..0 v. Australia..7													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Tony Jamieson					GK	Zeljko Kalac					
	DF	Terry Paniani					DF	Kevin Muscat	21, 45(pk)				
	DF	Dean Tereu					DF	Shaun Murphy					
	DF	John Pareanga				75	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	59				
	DF	Ngatuaine Mani					DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto	24				
	DF	Mark Jamieson					DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					
	DF	James Nand					DF	Paul Okon					
	MF	Christian Teiva Tauira				84	MF	Craig Foster	30, 42, 51, 80				
	MF	Joseph Chambers					MF	Brett Emerton					46
	MF	Daniel Shepherd				75*	FW	David Zdrilic	35, 65				69
	FW	Stenter Mani					FW	Paul Agostino	18, 53, 68				
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Junior Puroku				75	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica	70				46
	MF	Hinoi Henry				84	FW	Clayton Zane	82, 87, 89				69
	MF	Tristram Chambers				75*							
Team Coach		Alan Taylor					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Ronan Leauistic (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has crushed the Cook Islands 17-nil, in its opening round match of the Oceania Nations Soccer Cup, being played in Tahiti.

It took the LG Socceroos almost 20 minutes and a few missed chances to finally get on the board, but striker Paul Agostino's goal in the 18th minute heralded his personal hat-trick, while the man who delivered the corner, Craig Foster, went on to bag four of his own.

Foster was everywhere in the first half, and after setting up the opening goal, delivered a free-kick in the 21st minute which was laid off to defender Kevin Muscat, who rocketed his shot past the keeper for 2-0.

Three minutes later, midfielder Danny Tiatto added his name to the scoring list with a powerful left footer, while Foster finally made the scoreboard himself in the 30th minute.

The midfielder had a hand in Australia's fifth goal, crossing the ball into striker David Zdrilic who netted for 5-0 and then scored his second in the 42nd for 6-0.

Australia was then awarded a penalty in time added on when Brett Emerton was brought down in the box, Muscat slotting the ball home for his second of the evening, and putting the LG Socceroos up 7-0 at half-time.

The break didn't stop Australia's momentum, with Foster bagging his hat-trick six minutes into the second half to put the LG Socceroos up by eight.

Agostino bagged his second just two minutes later for 9-0, while defender Tony Popovic scored his first goal for Australia from a header in the 59th minute, to put the LG Socceroos into double figures.

Zdrilic scored his second of the night in the 65th Agostino bagged his hat-trick three minutes later, while second half substitute Steve Corica also got in on the act, breaking down the right and beating the keeper for 13-0 in the 70th minute.

Foster claimed goal number four just ten minutes later after a lay-off from substitute Clayton Zane, who then went on to claim his stake in the game, scoring three goals in 7 minutes to put away his first goals for the senior team, and finish proceedings.

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 989, 27/6/2000, page 2

Australia kicked off the Oceania Nations Cup with a record 17-0 thumping of Cook Islands, scoring goals at almost five minutes intervals in a farcical start to the tournament.

Even without their British based stars Harry Kewell, Mark Bosnich and Mark Viduka, the Australians proved far too strong for their outclassed opponents, bettering their previous international record of 16-0 set against the same nation two years ago.

The Cook Islanders, who have just 600 registered players, managed to keep the Australians out for the first 18 minutes of the match but once the first goal arrived, the rest came in an avalanche.

"We knew it was going to be tough, it was what we expected and a bit more," Cook Islands coach Alan Taylor said.

Australia led 7-0 at halftime then added a further 10 goals in the second half. Craig Foster led the way with four, while Clayton Zane scored a hat trick in the final eight minutes after coming on as a substitute.

Kevin Muscat, David Zdrilic and Paul Agostino bagged two goals each and Tony Popovic, Danny Tiatto, Stan Lazaridis and Steve Corica collected one apiece as the Australians spent the game target shooting.

The scoreline could have been much greater if not for the heroics of Cook Islands goalkeeper Tony Jamieson, who pulled off more than a dozen great saves to win the man of the match award.

Scorers: Agostino 18, 53, 68; Muscat 21, 47+; Tiatto 24; Foster 30, 42, 51, 80; Zdrilic 35, 65; Popovic 59; Corica 70; Zane 82, 87, 89.

The scorers list conflicts with the match report text where Agostino is reported as scoring 2 goals and Lazaridis 1 goal.

Other reports have the scorers as Muscat 21, 45(pk); Popovic 60; Tiatto 24; Lazaridis 55; Foster 30, 42, 51, 80; Zdrilic 35, 65; Agostino 18, 68; Corica 70 and Zane 82, 87, 89.

Oceania Nations Cup, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
23rd. June 2000, 14.00			Stade de Pater, Papeete, Tahiti									300	
Solomon Islands..0 v. Australia..6													
half time, Solomon Islands..0 v. Australia..6													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Fred Hale					GK	Zeljko Kalac					
	DF	Humphrey Dei					DF	Kevin Muscat	39(pk)				46
		Jeff Kwaome		59			DF	Steve Horvat					
	DF	Gideon Omokirio	36(og)				DF	Stephen Laybutt					
	DF	Jimmy Kaieroa					DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					
	MF	Francis Wasi		33			DF	Paul Okon (c)					33
	MF	Stanley Waita		71			DF	Scott Chipperfield	6				
	MF	Noel Berry				46	MF	Brett Emerton					
	MF	Jack Samani					MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica					
	MF	Timothy Paoka					MF	Aurelio Vidmar					
		Colman Maniadalo				46*	FW	Clayton Zane	13, 35	66			
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	Batram Suri		58		46		DF	Simon Colosimo				46
	FW	Commins Menapi		62		46*		FW	Pablo Cardozo	43			33
Team Coach		George Cowie					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Brian Precious (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia and reproduced in the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 989, 27/6/2000, page 2

Australia has advanced to the semi finals of the Oceania Nations Cup being played in Tahiti, with a 6-0 victory over the Solomon Islands, at the Stade de Pater tonight.

All six of the LG Socceroo goals came in the first half, with a spirited fight back by the Solomons containing the Australian attack in the second half.

Scott Chipperfield began proceedings in the sixth minute, latching onto a pass from Captain Paul Okon to take Australia up 1-0.

Seven minutes later, Clayton Zane continued his goal scoring form after being put through by Steve Corica, while at the other end, goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac was finally called into action in the 26th minute, to make his first real save of the tournament.

Zane netted his second of the evening in the 35th minute and virtually set up the next goal a minute later, providing the cross which led to an own goal by Gideon Omokirio.

Three minutes later, first half replacement Pablo Cardozo was brought down in the penalty area, with Kevin Muscat converting for 5-0, while Cardozo scored his first goal for Australia in the 43rd minute after a Brett Emerton shot rebounded of the cross bar.

Two second half replacements by the Solomon Islands brought extra spark, a spate of yellow cards and more work for Kalac in the second forty five but no goals, with the final score-line 6-0 to the LG Socceroos.

"I was reasonably happy with the first half, but the second half showed what I've been trying to stress to the boys for the last ten days," said LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina after the game. "We lost our concentration, we lost motivation and discipline, and with no disrespect intended toward our opposition, we played down to their level. We now have a very short preparation for the semi in two days, so we need to refresh the players, but tonight was definitely a game of two halves, and if we had to learn the lesson, then it was better learned tonight than later in the tournament." Farina concluded.

Australia now plays the winner of tonight's second match between Tahiti and Vanuatu in the first semi final, while New Zealand takes on the Solomon Islands in the second.

Oceania Nations Cup, Semi-final													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
25th. June 2000, 12.00			Stade de Pater, Papeete, Tahiti									300	
Vanuatu..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Vanuatu..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	David Chilia		85				GK	Zeljko Kalac				
	DF	Wilkins Simon Lauru		82				DF	Kevin Muscat	4(pk)			
		Lexa Bule Bibi		76				DF	Shaun Murphy				
		Georges Natuoivi						DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	DF	Graham Demas						DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto		43		
	MF	Georgino Tura						DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	MF	Willie August Marango		90+2				DF	Paul Okon				
	MF	Pita David Maki				64		MF	Craig Foster		64		65
	MF	Gerard Maki Haitong				90		MF	Brett Emerton				
	FW	Richard Iwai						FW	David Zdrilic				55
	FW	Ivoki Kaltak				46		FW	Paul Agostino				
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Fedy Vava				64		MF	Aurelio Vidmar				65
	FW	Auretau Frank King				90		FW	Clayton Zane				55
	FW	Hert Obed				46							
Team Coach		Juan Carlos Buzzetti					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Brian Precious (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia is through to the final of the Oceania Nations Cup, after grinding out a 1-0 victory over Vanuatu, in todays semi final at the Stade de Pater in Tahiti.

In a game of few chances and lots of tough tackling, Kevin Muscat put the ball away from the penalty spot in the 4th minute after a hand-ball incident, for the only goal of the game.

The LG Socceroos were continually frustrated by a Vanuatuan team which put everything into defence, and continually foiled Australian attacks at the last minute.

"Basically, it was an ugly game to watch, but we got what we needed out of it, and that was a win," said LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina after the game. "I thought we were a little flat, but they did exactly what we expected them to do, which was to put everyone behind the ball. To their credit, they were very organized in defence and it was up to us to break them down, and I was a little disappointed with some aspects of our game. I felt we were too slow in our buildups and as a result would come up against a wall of defence every time, and we didnt have enough penetration from out wide, with the exception of Stan Lazaridis. Still, in the end we were expected to win and we did win, and I'm very confident we will improve into the Final."

Australia will play the winner of tonights second semi final between New Zealand and the Solomon Islands.

Oceania Nations Cup, Final													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
28th. June 2000, 16.00			Stade de Pater, Papeete, Tahiti									300	
New Zealand..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, New Zealand..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Jason Batty						GK	Zeljko Kalac				
	DF	Che Bunce						DF	Kevin Muscat				
	DF	Sean Douglas						DF	Shaun Murphy	40			
	DF	Jonathan Perry						DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	DF	Gavin Wilkinson				70		DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				
	DF	Christian "Kris" Bouckenoooghe						DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	DF	Scott Smith						DF	Paul Okon				
	MF	Simon Elliott						MF	Craig Foster	66			80
	MF	Chris Jackson						MF	Brett Emerton				
	MF	Mark Atkinson				77		FW	David Zdrilic				
	FW	Christopher "Chris" Killen						FW	Paul Agostino				80*
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Raffaele de Gregorio				70		MF	Aurelio Vidmar				80
	FW	Paul Urlovic				77		FW	Clayton Zane				80*
Team Coach		Ken Dugdale					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Harry Attison (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has qualified for the Confederations Cup, beating New Zealand 2-0 today, in the final of the Oceania Nations Cup in Tahiti.

The LG Socceroos dominated play from the opening whistle and were rarely troubled in defence. After a number of corners, defender Shaun Murphy finally put the Australians on the board, and in the process scored his first National Team goal, after a Stan Lazaridis corner was headed back by Paul Agostino, for Murphy to slot it home in the 40th minute.

The one-way traffic continued in the second half, Murphy unlucky not to net his second just four minutes into the half, while Lazaridis almost caught the New Zealand keeper out in the 55th minute with a free kick which went just over the bar. The LG Socceroos secured the victory in the 66th minute however, Danny Tiatto making a break down the left and beating three defenders before crossing the ball to a waiting Craig Foster, who put it away for the 2-0 scoreline.

"It certainly was a relief to win the Final, its always a relief when you win games as important as this one," said LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina after the game. "I felt the boys played exceptionally well out there tonight, we dominated the entire 90 minutes and we deserved to win. New Zealand was always going to be dangerous, and they were, more from the set pieces than anything else, but we held our discipline under difficult circumstances. To actually qualify for the Confederations Cup is a huge relief for me, and I give a big pat on the back to the players, they deserve all of the accolades they get they've given up a lot of things to spend the last three weeks in camp with the National Team, and its paid off for them."

"I'm very proud to be associated with this group of boys." Farina concluded.

LG Cup / Friendship Tournament													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
4th. October 2000, 17.20			Al-Maktoum Stadium, Al Nasr Sports Club, Dubai										
Kuwait..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Kuwait..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
21	GK	Falah Dabsha Al-Majidi						GK	Zeljko Kalac (c)				
3	DF	Jamal Mubarak Abdul-Rahman						DF	Simon Colosimo				
5	DF	Nohair Mohsen Al-Shammari						DF	Hayden Foxe				
6	DF	Hussain Al-Khodari						DF	Stephen Laybutt				
2	DF	Osama Hussain Sultan Abdullah						DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
7	MF	Bader Haji Al-Halabeej						MF	Brett Emerton				
		Saleh Al-Azmi						MF	Kasey Wehrman				72
13	MF	Ahmad Al-Mutairi						MF	Josip Skoko				
16	MF	Nasser Al-Othman				64		DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				
9	FW	Bashar Abdullah Salem A. Abdulaziz				69		FW	John Aloisi	49			60
20	FW	Jasem Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Huwaidi				74		FW	Paul Agostino				66
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	Ahmed Mousa Mirza				69		MF	Stuart "Archie" Lovell				72
	FW	Faraj Laheeb Saeed				74		FW	Michael Curcija				60
	DF	Nasser Al-Souhi				64		DF	Scott Chipperfield				66
Team Coach		Dušan Uhrin					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Moslem Ahmed (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

According to Kuwait Football Association, Nohair Mohsen Al-Shammari is Nehayer Al Shammary; he is also shown as Nouhair Al Shemari

Also from the KFA, Hussain Al-Khodari is named as Husain Al Khudary. Osama Hussain Sultan Abdullah is named Osamah Husain. Ahmad Al-Mutairi is named Ahmed Al Mutairi. Jasem Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Huwaidi is named Jasem Al Wahaidi and is also shown as Jassaem Al-Houwaidi and Jasem Al-Huwaidy. Faraj Laheeb Saeed is named Faraj Lahheb, and Nasser Al-Souhi is named Nasser Souhi.

match report from Soccer Australia

The Australians dominated the first half and had a number of chances, the best of which fell to John Aloisi in the 11th minute, the striker sending his shot across the goal face and just past the post..

The Coventry striker made amends early in the second half however, latching onto a pass from defender Hayden Foxe who had broken through the midfield, and slotting the ball into the back of the net for a 1-0 lead.

His strike partner, Paul Agostino, then almost made it 2-0 just six minutes later, capitalising on a quick counter-attack from a Kuwaiti free kick, only to see his thundering shot bounce off the cross bar.

Kuwait sparked into action late in the second half, Australian captain and goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac called into action in the 71st minute, getting his fingertips to a strike, and managing to tip the ball onto the cross bar and to safety.

Australia's final chance fell to international debutante Stuart Lovell, who himself hit the post after beating the Kuwaiti defence, the LG Socceroos holding on for the one goal victory.

"I was quite pleased with our performance tonight, towards the end of the game we lost a bit of concentration and gave away a few chances, but in general, we were creating the chances, we hit the post a couple of times, and on the whole I thought the boys played well," said coach Frank Farina after the game. "When you take into consideration that most of the boys have been in the country for less than 48 hours and had just one training session together, it's very pleasing to see the way we've adapted to the conditions. Our next game against South Korea will be very tough, so we'll see how everyone comes up in the wash in terms of injury, and probably undertake a light preparation to suit the very hot and humid weather conditions we're experiencing at the moment." Farina concluded.

LG Cup / Friendship Tournament													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. October 2000, 19.30			Al-Maktoum Stadium, Al Nasr Sports Club, Dubai									1000	
Korea Republic..4 v. Australia..2													
half time, Korea Republic..1 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Lee Woon-Jae					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac (c)				
17	DF	Choi Sung-Yong				46	14	DF	Simon Colosimo				
20	DF	Hong Myung-Bo (c)				80	12	DF	Hayden Foxe				
24	DF	Park Jae-Hong					4	DF	Stephen Laybutt		90		
30	DF	Sim Jae-Won	44				5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
4	DF	Park Jin-Sub					7	DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto		42		42
12	DF	Lee Young-Pyo					10	MF	Brett Emerton				75
19	MF	Kim Do-Kyun				46*	8	MF	Kasey Wehrman				61
23	MF	Park Ji-Sung					6	MF	Josip Skoko				75*
9	FW	Seol Ki-Hyun	64				9	FW	John Aloisi				61*
28	FW	Choi Chul-Woo				46**	11	FW	Paul Agostino	30, 35	86		
SUBSTITUTES													
10	MF	Noh Jung-Yoon	48			46	16	MF	Stuart "Archie" Lovell				61
7	DF	Kim Tae-Young	87			80	17	FW	Michael Curcija				61*
16	DF	Kim Sang-Sik				46*	15	DF	Scott Chipperfield				42
11	FW	Lee Dong-Gook	90+2(pk)			46**	19	DF	Luke Casserly				75
							13	DF	Constantinos "Con" Blatsis				75*
Team Coach		Huh Jung-Moo					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Farid Ali (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Park Jin-Sub is also shown as Park Jin-Seop. Seol Ki-Hyun is also shown as Seol Ki-Hyeon.
Some sources have No.5 Lee Lim-Saeng as playing in place of Kim Tae-Young.

match report from Soccer Australia

Two goals from Paul Agostino in the first half seemingly set the LG Socceroos in the box seat, but a strong come-back by the South Koreans, combined with mistakes in the Australian defence saw that lead whittled away early in the second half.

Australia opened up the scoring in the 30th minute, a pin-point cross from Tony Vidmar picking out Agostino, with the big striker beating his opponent and the goalkeeper to put Australia one-up.

Five minutes later, Agostino was on hand again to finish off an Australian counter-attack which involved half a dozen players, Brett Emerton providing the final pass to the striker who again slotted the ball in for his second of the evening.

Australia's lead was reduced on the verge of half-time when a Korean free-kick on the edge of the box was headed in by S.Jae-Won, and was nullified just 3 minutes into the second half when a mistake in the defence let in N.Jung Yoon for the equaliser.

A goal-mouth scramble which caught goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac off-guard resulted in South Korea taking the lead for the first time in the match at the 65th minute mark, with the scoreline extended after defender Stephen Laybutt brought down a Korean player in the box in extra time, L.Dong-Gook converting the resulting penalty for a 4-2 victory to South Korea.

The Australian Camp will break up later today, with players immediately heading back to their respective Clubs, and LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina due back in Sydney early in the week.

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 1004, 10/10/2000, page 2

Australia has lost it's second and final match at the LG Four Nations Cup in Dubai, going down 4-2 to South Korea.

Two goals from Paul Agostino in the first half seemingly set Australia in the box seat, but a strong come-back by the South Koreans, combined with mistakes in the Australian defence saw that lead whittled away early in the second half.

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AUSTRALIA 2 (Paul Agostino 30', 35') SOUTH KOREA 4 (S.Jae-Won 44', N.Jung-Yoon 48', S.Ki-Hyeon 65', L.Dong-Gook pen 92+)

YELLOW CARDS: B.Emerton (Aus), D.Tiatto (Aus), P.Agostino (Aus), K.Tae-Yong (Kor), S.Laybutt (Aus).

AUSTRALIAN LINEUP: Z.Kalac (gk/cpt); S.Colosimo, H.Foxe, S.Laybutt, T.Vidmar, B.Emerton (L.Casserly 75'), K.Wehrman (S.Lovell 61'), J.Skoko (C.Blatsis 75'), D.Tiatto (S.Chipperfield 42'), J.Aloisi (M.Curcija 61'), P.Agostino.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
15th. November 2000,			Hampden Park, Glasgow, Scotland									30985	
Scotland..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, Scotland..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Jonathan Gould						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
	DF	David Weir				46		DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	DF	Thomas "Tom" Boyd (c)						DF	Shaun Murphy				
	DF	Christian Dailly						DF	Kevin Muscat				
	MF	Brian O'Neill				58		DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	MF	Craig Burley				63		DF	Paul Okon				
	MF	Barry Ferguson						DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				67
	MF	Colin Cameron				46*		MF	Brett Emerton	12			
	MF	Dominic Matteo						MF	Josip Skoko				75
	MF	Donald "Don" Hutchison						FW	Paul Agostino				46
	FW	William "Billy" Dodds						FW	David Zdrilic	66			89
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Matthew "Matt" Elliott				46		MF	Kasey Wehrman				75
	DF	Edward Colin Hendry				58		MF	Jacob Burns				67
	FW	Paul Dickov				63		FW	Mile Sterjovski				46
	FW	Neil McCann				46*		FW	Clayton Zane				89
Team Coach		Craig Brown					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Pascal Garibian (France)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Alan Davidson

It didn't cost Scotland World Cup or European Champion-ship qualifying points and, in the great scheme of things, it will not be regarded throughout the world of football as a matter of any great significance.

But Scotland's 2-0 defeat by Australia at Hampden last night is a source of great embarrassment and concern to all who regard this game as an integral part of our culture. Let's put it this way. Who could have conceived, as recently as 20 years ago, that a Scottish international team could have been beaten on their own patch by a side from the Antipodes? Talk about going Down Under? The grandest forklift truck in the world would toil to lift them after this huge embarrassment. The result and the ineptitude of the performers came just hours after the Scottish national side had been elevated to 20th place in the FIFA rankings, which just goes to show that, as Disraeli once said, there are lies, damned lies, and then there are statistics.

Scotland were woeful last night, comprehensively beaten by a first-half goal by Brett Emerton and a second-half strike by David Zdrilic. They seemed to lack any will or combative spirit; they had turned up, but without any great conviction, and that has to be a cause of great concern to the manager, Craig Brown. The Scots were outplayed in every area of the pitch. In defence they were sluggish, in the midfield they were second best to a fluid Australian system, and in attack they produced the level of heat that, normally, babies bathe in. In short, there was no cohesion whatsoever to their play. They were a shambles, and conceded our third successive defeat at the national stadium.

Of course, all sorts of arguments can be used to analyse this dire performance. We were short of key men - yet the Aussies were missing Craig Moore, Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell. Ultimately, there is no get-out clause, because Scotland have been embarrassed big time, and claims that our players are being overworked just do not carry any significant weight.

Australia were the better team and by a distance. Maybe our over-paid and under-performed footballers will now recognise they do not hold any franchise on supremacy against teams which used to be regarded as Third World nonentities. To be fair to Brown, he faced up to the issue and said: "If we got to take anything at all positive from this game, then it must be the certainty that there can be no complacency any longer.

We have a vital World Cup qualifying tie coming up next March against Belgium at Hampden and we must pull together and improve. "I had told the players before the game that they would be facing a very powerful side. Football changes every year. Some sides decline and others make progress, and we should have been well aware of the advances the Australians have made over the years since we beat them in a World Cup qualifier in 1985. "They have a great athletic tradition which is now being witnessed in their football team. Their players are at major clubs throughout Europe. "But I have to emphasise this is no excuse for our performance. We need a quick and dramatic improvement if we are to beat Belgium in our next World Cup qualifying tie. I am unhappy with the performance and I hope the players are also. When they examine their contributions, they should be less than pleased."

The Scots were behind as early as the 11th minute, the first indication of the frailties in a defence composed of Tom Boyd, Christian Dailly and Brian O'Neil.

The Feyenoord player, the excellent Brett Emerton, made a decisive run from the right, his strength holding off defenders, and he slid his shot under Jonathan Gould.

Given the obvious early superiority of the Australians, this early advantage came as no surprise. They might well have increased their lead a couple of minutes later when Paul Agostino sent a header just over the crossbar from a corner kick and then, 22 minutes into the game, Stan Lazaridis powered a left-foot free-kick against the crossbar from 25 yards with Gould off his line and beaten. Sadly, there was not a lot Scotland could do to stem the flow of Australia's aggression. They were spectators rather than competitors in this contest. The angst got to Brown, who was warned for what he considered to be touchline tantrums by the French referee, Pascal Garibian, in the 28th minute. His urgings did not enhance the cause. Some eight minutes before the interval, Agostino cut in from the left and forced Gould into a difficult save.

All the Scots had to show for their participation so far was an effort by Don Hutchison which was deflected over the crossbar by a defender. Brown, looking for an escape route, sent on Matt Elliott and Neil McCann at the start of the second half for Colin Cameron and David Weir, but no matter how he shuffled the pack the aces of his planning would not fall. Even the introduction of the vastly experienced Colin Hendry, who replaced Brian O'Neil with some 30 minutes remaining, could not change the pattern. Hutchison did find himself with another half-chance in the 61st minute when he was put through on goal by the largely ineffectual Barry Ferguson. His volley was saved by the Australian keeper, Mark Schwarzer. Again, now clutching at straws, Brown replaced Craig Burley with Paul Dickov. But to no avail as the Aussies increased their lead in the 65th minute. Kevin Muscat sent over a cross from the right and Zdrilic's header beat Gould.

There was no way back for the Scots and, to be fair, they got precisely what they deserved from this match. If anything is to be learned from it, it is that their position at the top of their World Cup qualifying group is fraught with uncertainty. Maybe a collection of their players had been ordered by their clubs to play at half-pace, but, even so, they showed themselves to be lacking in the essential qualities required to compete at a decent level. You wouldn't wish to see the lot that represented Scotland last night going in against the better nations of the world in Japan and Korea in 2002. Were that to be the case, embarrassment would quickly transform itself into humiliation. As Brown said: "It wasn't good enough and I am not happy with it. The players have been informed of this. "We can't make excuses, because we have to recognise that, over all, Australia were the better team."

match report from the Australian & British Soccer Weekly, Volume 21, Number 1010, 21/11/2000, page 25

David Zdrilic proved the perfect stand-in for striker Mark Viduka as he sealed a 2-0 win for Australia over Scotland in a friendly at Hampden Park last week.

Both sides were missing a clutch of leading players but Australia coach Frank Farina hailed his team's performance as their best since he took over.

"I have always felt Australia has not had enough strength in depth but we had Mark Viduka, Harry Kewell, John Aloisi, Tony Vidmar and Mark Bosnich out, and it was good to see more depth in the team," he said.

"That was the best performance since I have been in charge," he added. "We came here as underdogs and the Scots are top of their World Cup group, so they must be doing something right."

Zdrilic, who plays for German club Unterhaching, was playing only because Leeds United striker Viduka failed a late fitness test on an ankle.

But he condemned an experimental Scots side to defeat with a 66th minute header following a first-half goal by Brett Emerton.

Feyenoord striker Emerton put the Australians in front after 12 minutes following a fine pass from Paul Okon.

Emerton stepped inside Christian Dailly's challenge and drove a left-foot shot under goalkeeper Jonathon Gould.

Scotland might have had an equaliser just before halftime when Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer made a superb point-blank save from Don Hutchison's shot.

But Zdrilic earned the reward for his impressive running in the second half with a downward header from six metres from a cross by Kevin Muscat.

Farina reserved special praise for Feyenoord striker Emerton, whose early strike left the Scots chasing the game.

"Brett has just come to Europe and is playing with a big club at Feyenoord and I think he is going to be very special," he said.

"He has all the attributes to be a top player."

Scotland coach Craig Brown was less impressed by his team's efforts.

"That was as badly as we have played," said Brown. "We let the crowd down and the tempo and attitude will need to be a lot better when we play Belgium in the World Cup in March - or we will be in trouble."

"We had a bad day at the office and everyone is guilty."

2001

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
28th. February 2001, 20.10			Estadio Nemesio Camacho, Bogotá, Colombia									2071	
Colombia..3 v. Australia..2													
half time, Colombia..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Faryd Camilo Mondragón Ali					GK	Michael Petkovic					
	DF	Gonzalo Martínez Caicedo				46	DF	Stephen Laybutt					46
	DF	Andrés Felipe Orozco Vásquez					DF	Constantinos "Con" Blatsis					
	DF	Manuel Alexander Fernández					DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					74
	DF	Roberto Carlos Cortés Restrepo					DF	Luke Casserly					46*
	MF	Freddy "Totono" Indurley Grisales	75				MF	Scott Chipperfield	90				
	MF	Hernando Patiño Álvarez				56	MF	Kasey Wehrman					46**
	MF	Alexander Sánchez Viveros					MF	Aurelio Vidmar (c)					
	MF	Óscar Alejandro Restrepo Ramirez				41	MF	Jacob Burns					
	FW	Néstor Fabián Salazar Díaz	66			74	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica	77(pk)				
	FW	Jorge Horacio Serna Castañeda	12			46*	FW	John Aloisi					69
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Iván Leonardo López Licht				46		DF	Fausto de Amicis				46
	MF	Andrés Eduardo Pérez Gutiérrez				56		DF	Angelo Costanzo				74
	MF	Arnulfo Valentierra Cuero				41		DF	Simon Colosimo				46*
	FW	Carlos Alberto Castro Herrera				74		FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				46**
	FW	Elson Evelio Becerra Vaca				46*		DF	Scott Miller				69
Team Coach		Luis Augusto García					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Henry Alfonso Cervantes Jimenez (Colombia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Oswaldo Díaz (Colombia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Denver Perdomo (Colombia)											

Manuel Alexander Fernández is also shown as Alex Fernández.

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has come back from a three-goal deficit, to lose to Colombia by a single goal, in the friendly soccer international played in Bogota this afternoon.

Two goals, one from the penalty spot, in the final fifteen minutes gave the LG Socceroos some reward for ninety minutes of hard work, played under difficult and unfamiliar conditions.

Colombia took the lead in the 11th minute, Jorge Serna catching Australian goalkeeper Michael Petkovic out with a header, and the home side continued to pressure throughout the first half, with Petkovic forced into a number of saves.

Nestor Salazar took full advantage of a communication breakdown in the LG Socceroo defence in the second half, Steve Horvat and Con Blatsis colliding while attempting to clear the ball, with Salazar in the right place to clean up and bury the ball in clear the ball, with Salazar in the right place to clean up and bury the ball in the back of the net.

Another goal in the 74th minute to Freddy Grisales looked to have put the game out of Australia's reach, however two minutes later, the LG Socceroos got their first Australia's reach, however two minutes later, the LG Socceroos got their first goal on the board via the penalty spot, Steve Corica converting after Scott Chipperfield was fouled in the box.

Chipperfield then went on to collect Australia's second in the dying minutes, his hard work paying off after Colombian goalkeeper Farid Mondragon tried to play the ball from a back-pass, and instead lost it to the Wollongong Wolves midfielder, who slotted the ball home.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. April 2001, 16.30			International Sports Stadium, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales									1500	
Australia..22 v. Tonga..0													
half time, Australia..10 v. Tonga..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Clint Bolton					1	GK	Tuahiva Finfeuiaki				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat (c)	17(pk), 28(pk), 54(pk), 83				2	DF	Kilifi Uele				
3	DF	Craig Moore					3	DF	Toakai Toto				63
4	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	65				5	DF	Filisione Taufahema				63*
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar	73				6	MF	Halapua Falepapalangi				
16	DF	Lindsay Wilson					9	MF	Lokoua Taufahema				63**
6	DF	Hayden Foxe					10	MF	Siuu Maamaloa				
10	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				69	11	MF	Akoli Mafi				
8	MF	Scott Chipperfield	3, 84				16	FW	Hateni Manu				
9	FW	John Aloisi	14, 23, 36, 45, 51, 63			73	17	FW	Kaisani Uhatahi				
19	FW	Damian Mori	12, 22, 39, 57			69*	19	FW	Teu Fakava				
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Michael Petkovic					4	MF	Unaloto-Ki-Atenoa Fe'ao				63**
7	MF	Aurelio Vidmar					7	MF	Solomone Moa				63*
11	FW	David Zdrilic	77, 90			69*	8	MF	Ipeni Fonua				
12	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					12	MF	Taniela Fonua				
13	MF	Constantinos "Con" Boutsianis	85			69	13	DF	Falame I langana				
14	DF	Simon Colosimo					14	MF	Lopeti Halapoi Fuimaono				
15	DF	Fausto de Amicis					15	MF	Timoate Moleni				63
17	DF	Scott "Scotty" Miller					18	FW	Penieli Moa				
20	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	79			73	20	GK	Viliami Taufahema				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Gary Phillips				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Harry Atisson (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 1		Elise Doriri (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 2		Teariki Goodwin (Cook Islands)											

Halapua Falepapalangi is also shown as Pua Falepapalangi.

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has beaten Tonga, and in the process notched up a new FIFA World Record scoreline, while striker Damian Mori has taken over the lead of Australia's goalscoring chart in "A" Internationals, after tonight's second round matches of the Oceania Group 1 World Cup Qualifiers, in Coffs Harbour.

The LG Socceroos notched up 22 goals for, and none against in the goal rampage, setting new standards for both World Cup Qualifiers and senior games, overall - previously, the best World Cup Qualifier scoreline was 19-0, set last year when Iran beat Guam, while the previous highest score in a senior game was a 20-0 scoreline by Kuwait over Bhutan in an Asia Cup match.

Meantime Mori's four goal haul has seen him surpass both John Kosmina and Attila Abonyi on Australia's leading goal-scorer chart, the Perth Glory striker now sitting on 26 "A" international goals, from just 39 "A" International games.

It was however midfielder Scott Chipperfield who showed a sign of things to come when he netted Australia's first in the third minute of the game, with Mori putting his first on the board 9 minutes later.

Striker John Aloisi walked away from the game with a six-goal haul, the first of his coming in the 14th minute, while captain Kevin Muscat scored a penalty hat-trick, the first of those taken in the 17th minute.

Aloisi and Mori both went on to rack-up hat-tricks before half-time, while Muscat put away another penalty, as the LG Socceroos took a 10-0 lead into the break.

Aloisi picked up his fifth in the 56th minute, Muscat successfully converted his third penalty three minutes later, Mori headed to the top of the Australian charts in the 57th minute, while it was back to Aloisi in the 63rd for his sixth and final goal of the night.

The defenders then pitched in with a goal apiece, Tony Popovic in the 65th minute and Tony Vidmar in the 73rd, before second half replacement strikers David Zdrilic and Archie Thompson both made their marks, scoring in the 77th and 78th minutes respectively.

Muscat picked up his fourth - this one from free play - in the 83rd, Chipperfield recorded his second of the night a minute later, Con Boutsianis celebrated his first cap with a goal in the 85th, and Zdrilic wrapped the night up with a goal right on full time.

"With due respect to the Tongans, you saw right from the start they had ten players in their defensive third and that's normal, I suppose Gary (Phillips, Tongan Coach) was trying to make sure they weren't embarrassed, or to keep the score down, but that's what we've been working on, we have to break teams down that are going to drop back," said coach Frank Farina after the game.

"The bottom line was we had to maintain our professionalism, the whole purpose is to qualify for the World Cup, and it's just another three points, regardless of the amount of goals," added captain Kevin Muscat.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
11th. April 2001, 19.00			International Sports Stadium, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales								3000		
Australia..31 v. American Samoa..0													
half time, Australia..16 v. American Samoa..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Michael Petkovic					1	GK	Nicky Salapu				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat (c)					4	DF	Mexico Lisi Leututu				50
3	DF	Craig Moore					5	DF	Soe Falimaua				
4	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	17, 19			46	7	DF	Levaula Fatu				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				46*	8	DF	Sulifou Faaloua				
14	DF	Simon Colosimo	51, 81				9	MF	Travis Pita Sinapita				
7	DF	Aurelio Vidmar	14, 80				13	MF	Sam Baby Mulipola				
12	MF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					15	MF	Pati Feagiai				
13	MF	Conatantinos "Con" Boutsianis	10, 50, 84				16	MF	Ben Falaniko				84
20	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	12, 23, 27, 29, 32, 37, 42, 45, 56, 60, 65, 85, 88				18	MF	Tiaoali'i Savea				
11	FW	David Zdrilic	13, 21, 25, 33, 58, 66, 78, 89				20	FW	Young Im Min				
SUBSTITUTES													
6	DF	Hayden Foxe					11	MF	Marshall Silao				
8	MF	Scott Chipperfield					14	FW	Soga Maina				
9	FW	John Aloisi					17	FW	Darrell Ioane				84
10	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica					19	MF	Richard D.Mariko				50
15	DF	Fausto de Amicis	55			46							
16	DF	Lindsay Wilson											
17	DF	Scott "Scotty" Miller				46*							
18	GK	Clint Bolton											
19	FW	Damian Mori											
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Tunoa Lui				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Ronan Leautic (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 1		David Sau (Solomon Islands)											
Assistant Referee 2		Michel Angot (Tahiti)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has notched up another World Record, and striker Archie Thompson has become the player with the highest goal tally in a single International match, after the LG Socceroos demolished American Samoa 31-0 in Oceania Group 1 World Cup Qualifiers at Coffs Harbour tonight.

Thompson netted more than a third of the tally with thirteen goals, eclipsing the former record of 10 goals in an international game, however his first hat-trick, which took 15 minutes to notch up, was not the fastest ever recorded.

The LG Socceroos took ten minutes to get the scoring underway, but when they did, the goals rained down on the American Samoans.

Con Boutsianis opened the deluge in the 10th minute, and was followed by Thompson with his first in the 12th, striker partner David Zdrilic with his first of eight in the 13th, and Aurelio Vidmar with his first in the 14th minute. Defender Tony Popovic chipped in with two before Zdrilic and Thompson took over to score 10 goals between them, leading Australia to a 16-0 scoreline at the half-time break.

Boutsianis again opened the scoreline in the second period, in the 50th minute, followed by Simon Colosimo with his first a minute later, and defender Fausto de Amicis capping off the South Melbourne-connection treble, with his only goal of the night in the 55th minute.

Thompson and Zdrilic again took over, scoring six goals between them in 22 minutes, with Thompson's 11th goal creating two new world records, giving Australia a 23-0 lead at the 65 minute mark, and eclipsing the mark set by the LG Socceroos on Monday night against Tonga.

The rout continued with Aurelio Vidmar, Colosimo and Boutsianis each chipping in again, Boutsianis' goal in the 84th minute recording his first hat-trick for Australia, before the strike partnership finished things up with goals in the 85th, 88th and 89th minutes.

"It's a result and really, that's all that matters, we now move onto Fiji, and as I said prior to the tournament, the aim was to win all four games, so it's a result," said coach Frank Farina after the match.

"I was pleased again with the professional attitude of the players, the way they went about it was in a very professional manner, and that, from my point, is the most pleasing aspect of the whole night. As I've said in the past, we go out and play pretty much every game in the same manner, we concentrate on what our strengths are and what we want to do on the park and we did that again tonight, and we did it well - the plan for us when we go into a game is always pretty much the same, we don't look too much at what other teams are doing, we try and make sure what we do, we do well, and it's been working quite well for us." Farina concluded. "It's obviously great scoring goals, and being part of a world record is an honour," said Archie Thompson after the game. "At halftime I was told about the record, but as Frank said, we're out there to do a job, and I'm just happy to score goals, against any opposition." Thompson concluded.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
14th. April 2001, 16.30			International Sports Stadium, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales								5000		
Australia..2 v. Fiji..0													
half time, Australia..1 v. Fiji..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Clint Bolton					20	GK	Isikeli Sevanaia				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat (c)					5	DF	Valerio Nasema				
3	DF	Craig Moore					8	DF	Emosi Baleinuku				
4	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					11	DF	Marika Namaqa	84			
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					12	DF	Esala Masinisau				
16	DF	Lindsay Wilson				53	13	DF	Leone Vurukania				87
6	DF	Hayden Foxe	79				14	DF	Jope Namawa Leka				
10	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica	22				15	MF	Ulaiasi Radike Mateiwai				90
13	MF	Constantinos "Con" Boutsianis				65	16	MF	Ratu Apenisa Roluvenisoba				
9	FW	John Aloisi					18	FW	Viliame Dawai Toma				84
19	FW	Damian Mori				70	19	FW	Josaia Sauturaga Bukalidi				
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Michael Petkovic					1	GK	Shamal Kumar				
7	MF	Aurelio Vidmar					2	MF	Maika Nacovunisaga Levula Kasami				
8	MF	Scott Chipperfield				65	3	FW	Abinesh Sailesh Samy				87
11	FW	David Zdrilic					4	DF	Cama Yabakivou				
12	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					6	MF	Thomas Robert Esaeli Qoro				
14	DF	Simon Colosimo				53	7	MF	Manoa Raiyawa Masi				
15	DF	Fausto de Amicis					9	FW	Shallemdra Lal				90
17	DF	Scott "Scotty" Miller					10	MF	Atnesh Prasad				
20	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				70	17	DF	Malakai Kainihewe				84
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Sashi Billy Singh				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Derek Rugg (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Elise Doriri (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 2		Teariki Goodwin (Cook Islands)											

Atresh Prasad is also shown as Atunesh Prasad. Viliame Dawai Toma is also shown as Viliame Dawa Toma.

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia is in prime position to wrap up Group 1 of the Oceania Qualifiers for the World Cup, after a hard fought 2-0 victory over Fiji, on Day 4 of action in Coffs Harbour.

Unlike the previous two victories, where the LG Socceroos amassed a total of 53 goals, Fiji proved a much tougher opponent in keeping the Australians to a goal in each half.

After several close chances, midfielder Steve Corica finally put the LG Socceroos on the board in the 22nd minute, on the end of a cross from Con Boutsianis, and netting the ball on his second attempt.

Hayden Foxe went close to increasing the lead in the 33rd minute, his header from a Boutsianis corner just over the bar, while Fiji almost equalised close to half-time, Leone Vurukania breaking down the right and putting a pin-point cross into the Australian goal-mouth, only to see his team-mate, Josaia Sauturaga sky his shot from right in front.

It was the same story in the second half, as Australia failed to capitalise on chances until the 79th minute, when Foxe netted Australia's second, Corica playing a short corner to Archie Thompson, whose cross was headed over to Foxe by Scott Chipperfield, for the 2-0 scoreline.

"The result, as we've been stressing all week, is the most important thing, and again the lads went out, maybe a little flatter tonight, but we got what we were after, a win." said LG Socceroo coach Frank Farina at the post-match media conference. "Fiji was very well disciplined, and they made it very difficult for us, I wouldn't say it surprised me, because I think Fijian football has come a long way in the last ten to fifteen years but as I said, the important thing for us is that it was a win tonight." Farina concluded.

"We didn't expect them to make it easy for us, and they certainly didn't do that, they had a lot of people behind the ball, and while we had a lot of possession, unfortunately we didn't score a few more goals, but two's enough to win a game," added captain Kevin Muscat. "We wanted to raise the tempo of the game, but it was very difficult, the way they played the match didn't allow us to do that, but it's all about qualifying for the next round, we still have one game to go, and we're looking to win that as well." Muscat concluded.

Australia's victory was dampened however, by an injury to John Aloisi, the striker stretchered from the field in the dying minutes of the game with damage to his hamstring.

"We don't know how bad it is, but it's very unfortunate, and I feel more for the guy than anything else, it's very disappointing for him," added Farina.

Aloisi has since been diagnosed with a grade 1 hamstring injury.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group 1													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
16th. April 2001, 16.30			International Sports Stadium, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales								1500		
Australia..11 v. Samoa..0													
half time, Australia..3 v. Samoa..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Michael Petkovic					1	GK	Molesi Tokuma				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat (c)					2	DF	Faimasasa Falilu				
3	DF	Craig Moore					4	DF	Pualele Lemana				
4	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	55, 89				5	DF	Philipo Bureta	81(og)			
15	DF	Fausto de Amicis					6	DF	Peko Victor		41		81
14	DF	Simon Colosimo					7	MF	Ambrose Asafo				
6	DF	Hayden Foxe	44			46	8	MF	Rudolph Lilomaiaava				
7	MF	Aurelio Vidmar	5, 49				16	MF	Ben Lemana				60
8	MF	Scott Chipperfield	76				10	FW	Richmond Faaisuasao				76
11	FW	David Zdrilic	28, 57				12	FW	Junior Michael				
20	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	75, 78				17	FW	Sale Sua-mili				
SUBSTITUTES													
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					3	DF	Dominic Gabriel				
9	FW	John Aloisi					9	MF	Etena Tokuma				
10	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica					11	MF	Edwin Tyrell				60
12	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					13	DF	Iosefa Maposua				81
13	MF	Constantinos "Con" Boutsianis					14	DF	Tema Faifua				
16	DF	Lindsay Wilson					15	MF	Migao Lauano				
17	DF	Scott "Scotty" Miller					18	MF	Peniamina Timo				76
18	GK	Clint Bolton					19	MF	Maletino Michael				
19	FW	Damian Mori				46	22	GK	Ted Losi Sikovi				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Vic Fernandez				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Brian Precious (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Bobby Memelongo (Papua New Guinea)											
Assistant Referee 2		Elise Doriri (Vanuatu)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia will play the winner of Oceania Group 2 in the next stage of World Cup Qualifying in June, after officially wrapping up Group 1 action today, with a comprehensive 11-0 victory over Samoa, in Coffs Harbour.

The LG Socceroos topped Group 1, unbeaten in four games, with a positive goal difference of 66, and four clean difference of 66, and four clean sheets.

Aurelio Vidmar got Australia's scoring underway today with a goal in the fifth minute, David Zdrilic adding the second midway through the first half, and Hayden Foxe finishing things up late in the first half for a 3-0 scoreline into the break.

Vidmar again got things rolling in the second half, smashing home a free kick from 25 metres out, while Tony Popovic chipped in with the first of his two six minutes later, to make it 5-0 in the 55th minute.

Two minutes later, Zdrilic posted his second, while Archie Thompson got his first for the night in the 75th minute after Scott Chipperfield slipped his way through four defenders to set up the striker in front of goal.

Chipperfield was himself rewarded a minute later to make it 8-0, while Thompson netted his second of the night in the 78th minute, after slicing through the defence and leaving the goalkeeper with no chance.

A deflection from a Simon Colosimo shot brought the tally into double figures for the LG Socceroos, while Popovic wrapped proceedings up a minute from full time, hitting the post and watching the ball dribble over the line for an 11-0 final scoreline to Australia.

"It took us a little while to get going, but the second half was very pleasing, while the first half was a little flat, in the second half the boys came out and did a good job." said coach Frank Farina at the post-match media conference.

"It was difficult psychologically, but in the end, we still had a job to do, and while we weren't happy with the way we were playing in the first half, we weren't happy with the distribution and we didn't create enough chances, in the second half, I think we put that right." added captain Kevin Muscat.

While Australia's focus now turns to the Confederations Cup, to be held next month in Korea, prior to the next round of Qualifiers against the winner of Oceania Group 2, the immediate focus of all players will be returning to their respective club-sides, as seasons around the world wind down.

For Muscat, it's a return to Wolverhampton Wanderers, with a great memory of this tournament.

"I said from day one the captaincy was pleasing, we were fortunate enough to go through without conceding a goal, and for me, I'm going to look back in a few years and see what an honour it was, and hopefully I'll also look back and say I was the captain at the beginning, at the first stage of when we qualified for the World Cup." Muscat concluded.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round, Group A													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
30th. May 2001, 19.30			Suwon World Cup Stadium, Suwon, Korea Republic									6232	
Mexico..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, Mexico..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Oswaldo Javier Sánchez Ibarra					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Luis Claudio Suárez Sánchez (c)					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
4	DF	David Alejandro Oteo Rojas					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
5	MF	Duilio César Jean Pierre Davino Rodriguez					14	DF	Shaun Murphy	20			
6	MF	Marco Antonio Ruiz Garcia	45+2			46	2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
8	MF	Juan Pablo Rodriguez Guerrero	45				8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis		77		78
9	MF	José Manuel Abundis Sandoval					7	MF	Josip Skoko	55			69
13	MF	Pável Pardo Segura					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)				
16	MF	Héctor Alberto Coyote Tapia				46*	17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				
20	MF	Victor Ruiz del Valle				66	20	FW	Clayton Zane				
10	FW	Jared Francisco Borgetti Echavarria					11	FW	David Zdrilic				66
SUBSTITUTES													
3	DF	Joaquin Beltrán Vargas					3	DF	Craig Moore				
7	MF	José David Rangel Torres					9	FW	John Aloisi				
11	FW	Daniel Osorno Calvillo	74			46	10	MF	Brett Emerton				
12	GK	Erubey Cabuto Garcia					12	GK	Clint Bolton				
14	MF	Germán Villa Castañeda					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
15	FW	Antonio de Nigris Guajardo					15	DF	Hayden Foxe				69
17	DF	Octavio Valdez Martinez					16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
18	MF	Cesáreo Victorino Mungaray				46*	18	MF	Scott Chipperfield				66
19	MF	Joaquin Reyes Chávez				66	19	MF	Aurelio Vidmar				
21	MF	Luis Ernesto Pérez Gómez					21	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				78
22	DF	Hugo Guillermo Chávez Fernández					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
23	GK	Oscar Manuel Dautt Bojorquez					23	GK	Frank Juric				
Team Coach		Enrique Meza Enriquez					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Felix Tangawarima (Zimbabwe)											
Assistant Referee 1		Egon Bereuter (Austria)											
Assistant Referee 2		Hilton Rodrigues (Brazil)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has got it's Confederation Cup campaign off to the best possible start, with a 2-0 victory over Mexico, in the opening round of games in Korea tonight.

In a virtual repeat performance of the 1997 clash against the same opponent at the same stage of the tournament, the Australians got off to a flying start, Clayton Zane unlucky not to open the scoring in the third minute, his powerful header saved brilliantly by the Mexican keeper.

Mark Schwarzer was called into action at the other end in the 17th minute, forced into a diving save to deflect a shot, but from there, the Australians regained the upper hand, and were rewarded just three minutes later with a goal to defender Shaun Murphy.

Good work down the right by the Australians resulted in Steve Corica whipping a cross to the back post, with Murphy in behind Zane to head home for 1-0.

After withstanding a Mexican onslaught to half-time, the LG Socceroos came out on the attack again in the second half, and were unlucky not to go ahead in the 53rd minute when David Zdrilic headed wide from a Kevin Muscat cross.

It took just another minute of play before Australia did increase it's lead however, captain Paul Okon working down the right and crossing the ball in, to see midfielder Josip Skoko slam home Australia's second from 20 metres out, for the final 2-0 scoreline.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round, Group A															
Date & Time				Venue				Weather				Temperature		Attendance	
1st. June 2001, 17.00				Daegu World Cup Stadium, Daegu, Korea Republic										44400	
France..0 v. Australia..1															
half time, France..0 v. Australia..0															
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution		
START LIST															
12	GK	Gregory Coupet					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer						
5	DF	Nicolas Gillet					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar						
15	DF	Jérémie Bréchet					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic						
18	DF	Frank Leboeuf (c)		59	78		3	DF	Craig Moore						
20	DF	Aoumana Camara					2	DF	Kevin Muscat						
6	MF	Youri Djorkaeff				87	8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis		81				
16	MF	Olivier Dacourt				74	7	MF	Josip Skoko				78		
19	MF	Christian Karembeu					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)						
22	MF	Laurent Robert					17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica						
11	FW	Sylvain Wiltord					20	FW	Clayton Zane	59			87		
14	FW	Frédéric Née				71	10	MF	Brett Emerton						
SUBSTITUTES															
1	GK	Ulrich Ramé					9	FW	John Aloisi		90		87		
2	DF	Willy Sagnol					11	FW	David Zdrilic						
3	DF	Bixente Lizarazu					12	GK	Clint Bolton						
4	MF	Patrick Vieira				87	13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				78		
7	MF	Robert Pirès			90+1	74	14	DF	Shaun Murphy						
8	DF	Marcel Desailly					15	DF	Hayden Foxe						
9	FW	Nicolas Anelka				71	16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat						
10	MF	Eric Carrière					18	MF	Scott Chipperfield						
13	DF	Mikaël Silvestre					19	MF	Aurelio Vidmar						
17	FW	Steve Marlet					21	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson						
21	FW	Christophe Dugarry					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski						
23	GK	Mickaël Landreau					23	GK	Frank Juric						
Team Coach		Roger Lemerre					Team Coach		Frank Farina						
Team Manager							Team Manager								
Referee		Carlos Batres (Guatemala)													
Assistant Referee 1		Michael Ragoonath (Trinidad and Tobago)													
Assistant Referee 2		Mohamed Saeed (Maldives)													

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has recorded one of the biggest wins in its history - and in the process notched up one of world soccer's biggest upsets - in beating France at the Confederations Cup, in Korea.

Striker Clayton Zane scored the game's only goal just short of the hour mark, as the LG Socceroos raced to the top of Group A action, undefeated after two games.

Literally a game of two halves, Australia defended for most of the first half, but turned the tables in the second, with an onslaught which seemed to surprise the opposition.

The best chance of the opening 45 minutes fell to French captain Frank Lebeouf, who headed wide with an open goal in front of him, from a Laurent Robert free-kick.

LG Socceroo midfielder Brett Emerton was unlucky not to open the scoring in the second half, his shot in the 51st minute from a Zane lay-off leaving French keeper Gregory Coupet beaten, but the shot agonisingly wide of the mark.

Eight minutes later, Lebeouf earned his first yellow card of the game, bringing down Steve Corica ten metres out from the box, after the midfielder had cut through the French defence.

Josip Skoko took the free-kick, beating the wall and forcing the keeper into a diving save, the ball tipped onto the left post and rebounding back into play, directly into the path of Zane, who calmly slotted the ball away for 1-0 Australia.

The 75th minute mark almost saw another goal to the LG Socceroos, Emerton earning a free kick, with Stan Lazaridis' shot inches over the bar, while three minutes later, Lebeouf was handed his second yellow card after a late tackle on Zane, the French captain dismissed from the field.

France had the opportunity to equalise in the 87th minute, but Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer pulled off a sensational save, denying a Robert header which was all but in, the LG Socceroos finishing the game 1-0 victors.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round, Group A													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
3rd. June 2001, 19.30			Suwon World Cup Stadium, Suwon, Korea Republic								42754		
Korea Republic..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, Korea Republic..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Lee Woon-Jae					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Choi Sung-Yong					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar		55		
7	DF	Kim Tae-Young					14	DF	Shaun Murphy				
15	DF	Lee Min-Sung					3	DF	Craig Moore				
20	DF	Hong Myung-Bo (c)					2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
4	DF	Song Jong-Gook					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	61			
19	MF	Lee Young-Pyo					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)				81
21	MF	Park Ji-Sung					15	DF	Hayden Foxe				46
9	FW	Kim Do-Hoon				64	10	MF	Brett Emerton				
11	FW	Seol Ki-Hyun					17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				46*
18	FW	Hwang Seon-Hong	24	90+2			20	FW	Clayton Zane		49	85	
SUBSTITUTES													
2	DF	Kang Chul					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
5	DF	Park Yong-Ho					7	MF	Josip Skoko				
6	MF	Yoo Sang-Chul					8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
8	MF	Yoon Jong-Hwan					9	FW	John Aloisi				
10	FW	Choi Yong-Soo				64	11	FW	David Zdrilic				46*
12	GK	Kim Yong-Dae					12	GK	Clint Bolton				
13	DF	Seo Deok-Kyu					16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
14	MF	Seo Dong-Won					18	MF	Scott Chipperfield				46
16	FW	An Hyo-Yeon					19	MF	Aurelio Vidmar				81
17	MF	Ha Seok-Ju					21	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
22	MF	Ko Jong-Soo					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
23	GK	Choi Eun-Sung					23	GK	Frank Juric				
Team Coach		Guus Hiddink (Netherlands)					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Oscar Ruiz (Colombia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hilton Rodrigues (Brazil)											
Assistant Referee 2		Igor Sramka (Slovakia)											

Hwang Seon-Hong is also shown as Hwang Sun-Hong.

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has qualified for the semi finals of the Confederations Cup, despite being beaten 1-0 tonight by host nation Korea Republic, in the final Group A game, in Suwon.

The LG Socceroos were made to defend for most of the first half, with the Koreans desperate to get the four goals required to overtake Australia on the Group A table, the continued attack paying off for the home side in the 24th minute.

Korean midfielder Sun Hong Hwang managed to out-maneuver Shaun Murphy in the goal-mouth, deftly clipping the ball over an advancing Mark Schwarzer, to record goal-mouth, deftly clipping the ball over an advancing Mark Schwarzer, to record the first, and subsequently only goal of the game.

The introduction of Scott Chipperfield in the second half added spark to the Australian attack, the Wollongong Wolves midfielder creating Australia's best chance in the 73rd minute, racing towards goal and cutting back to David Zdrilic, whose shot was easily saved by the Korean keeper.

Five minutes from full-time, Clayton Zane again had the chance to score for the LG Socceroos, his shot straight at the keeper, with the rebound back in the path of the striker.

The ensuing one-two with Brett Emerton saw Zane clash with the goal-keeper, resulting in the big striker being shown his second yellow card of the night, and marched from the field.

Zane will now miss Australia's semi final encounter with a yet to be determined opponent, but the LG Socceroos will be strengthened by the return of Stan Lazaridis from suspension.

Confederations Cup, Semi-final													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. June 2001, 17.00			Yokohama International Stadium, Yokohama, Japan									48699	
Japan..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, Japan..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Naoki Matsuda					2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
4	DF	Ryuzo Morioka				22	3	DF	Craig Moore		87	88	
16	DF	Koji Nakata					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar		66		
20	DF	Yasuhiro Hato					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic		42		
5	MF	Junichi Inamoto					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)				
7	MF	Hidetoshi Nakata (c)	43				8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
18	MF	Kazuyuki Toda					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
21	MF	Shinji Ono				55	17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				
9	FW	Akinori Nishizawa				80	18	MF	Scott Chipperfield		14		
22	FW	Takayuki Suzuki			56		11	FW	David Zdrilic				
SUBSTITUTES													
2	DF	Kenichi Uemura				22	7	MF	Josip Skoko				
6	DF	Toshihiro Hattori				55	9	FW	John Aloisi				
8	MF	Hiroaki Morishima				80	10	MF	Brett Emerton				
10	MF	Atsuhiro Miura					12	GK	Clint Bolton				
11	FW	Masashi Nakayama					14	DF	Shaun Murphy				
12	GK	Seigo Narazaki					15	DF	Hayden Foxe				
13	FW	Yoshiteru Yamashita					16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
14	MF	Teruyoshi Ito					19	MF	Aurelio Vidmar				
15	MF	Toshiya Fujita					20	FW	Clayton Zane				
17	MF	Tomokazu Myojin					21	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
19	FW	Tatsuhiko Kubo					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
23	GK	Ryota Tsuzuki					23	GK	Frank Juric				
Team Coach		Philippe Troussiere					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Benito Archundia (Mexico)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ferenc Szekely (Hungary)											
Assistant Referee 2		Curtis Charles (Antigua and Barbuda)											

match report from Soccer Australia

The LG Socceroos have lost the semi final of the Confederations Cup, going down to host nation Japan 1-0 in Yokohama tonight.

Played in monsoonal conditions from the kick-off, the driving rain made the surface extremely slippery, with both teams having trouble adjusting to the pace and bounce of the ball.

The first real chance of the game came in the 39th minute, when Steve Corica burst through the defence and found himself one-on-one with the Japanese keeper, who saved the shot.

A minute later, Stan Lazaridis' header touched the post and went wide, the midfielder on the end of a David Zdrilic cross and beating the goalkeeper, but unable to net the ball.

Two minutes from half-time, Japan took the lead against the run of play, Hidetoshi Nakata taking a free kick just outside the Australian box, the ball skidding through the wall and into the back of the net off Kevin Muscat's boot.

The 56th minute saw Japanese striker Takayuki Suzuki sent from the field after an off-the-ball incident with Tony Popovic, while four minutes later Australia made a double substitution, as the LG Socceroos sought the equaliser.

Archie Thompson created several chances and was unlucky not to draw it back on level terms, his best attempt a header just wide of the post late in the game, while Nakata again had a golden opportunity to wrap it up for Japan in the 77th minute, beating the Australian defence but shooting wide.

In the end, the single goal for Japan was enough, with Australia's misery compounded by Craig Moore's send-off late in the game, for a second yellow-card offence.

Australia will now travel back to Korea tomorrow, to play Brazil in the Third versus Fourth play-off in Ulsan.

Confederations Cup, 3rd-4th place play-off													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
11th. June 2001, 19.00			Mansu Football Stadium, Ulsan, Korea Republic								28520		
Brazil..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Brazil..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Nélson de Jesus Silva "Dida"					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	José Marcelo Ferreira "Ze Maria"					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar (c)				
4	DF	José Edmilson Gomes de Moraes"Edmilson"					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
8	MF	Marcos André Batista dos Santos "Vampeta" (c)					14	DF	Shaun Murphy	84			
11	FW	Carlos Miguel da Silva Júnior				66	16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
15	DF	Cláudio Roberto da Silva "Caçapa"					7	MF	Josip Skoko				71
16	DF	Leonardo Lourenço Bastos "Léo"					8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
18	MF	Fábio Rochemback				91	17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				61
20	MF	Ramon Menezes Hubner "Ramon"					18	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
21	FW	Washington Stecanela Cerqueira "Washington"					11	FW	David Zdrilic				
22	FW	Magno Alves de Araújo					20	FW	Clayton Zane				
SUBSTITUTES													
3	DF	Lucimar Ferreira da Silva "Lúcio"					2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
5	MF	Léomar Leiria					3	DF	Craig Moore				
6	DF	Gustavo Nery de Sá da Silva					4	MF	Paul Okon				
7	FW	Leandro Câmara do Amaral "Leandro"				91	9	FW	John Aloisi				
10	MF	Robert da Silva Almeida "Robert"					10	MF	Brett Emerton				
12	GK	Carlos Germano Schwambach Neto					12	GK	Clint Bolton				
13	DF	Evanilson Aparecido Ferreira "Evanilson"					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				71
14	DF	Cesar Augusto Belli Michelin					15	DF	Hayden Foxe				
17	FW	Vágner Rogério Nunes "Vágner"					19	MF	Aurelio Vidmar				
19	MF	Júlio César Baptista				66	21	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
23	GK	Fábio Costa					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski				61
							23	GK	Frank Juric				
Team Coach		Emerson Leão (Brazil)					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Hellmut Krug (Germany)											
Assistant Referee 1		Abdelmajid Jeddoui (Morocco)											
Assistant Referee 2		John Berry (New Zealand)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia has beaten Brazil, to take third place at the 2001 Confederations Cup, in Seoul.

A goal to defender Shaun Murphy - his third for Australia - in the 83rd minute, sealed the victory, the first time that Australia has both scored a goal against, and a victory over, the former World Champion, at the senior level, in six attempts.

The LG Socceroos dominated for most of the first half and were unlucky not to take the lead in the 12th minute, a move between Steve Horvat and Stan Lazaridis finishing with Clayton Zane's on-target header being parried away by the Brazilian goalkeeper.

A few minutes later, Josip Skoko again tried the shot which netted him a goal against Mexico, his effort this time just inches past the post, while Zane continued to make life uncomfortable for the keeper, almost forcing an error from a back-pass midway through the first forty five, and then skimming the crossbar with a shot later in the half.

Brazil then gained the upperhand in the second half, bringing out the best in the Australian defence with two clearances off the line, while keeper Mark Schwarzer was also kept busy, the save of the game coming in the 72nd minute with the Australian keeper banking on his reflexes to keep the ball out.

The deadlock was broken in the 83rd minute by Australia however, Lazaridis taking an acute angled free-kick from the touchline, his curling ball finding an unmarked Murphy, whose on-target header sealed the game. Brazil almost found the equaliser in the second minute of extra time when Magno Alves drew Schwarzer out of his goal-mouth and then looped the ball over his head, but the ball dropped short, eventually bouncing over the cross-bar.

The LG Socceroos now return home on Monday, before regrouping on June 16, for the World Cup Qualifier Camp, in Sydney.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group, Final, 1st. Leg													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
20th. June 2001, 19.30			Wellington Regional Stadium, Wellington, New Zealand (Westpac Trust Stadium)									19500	
New Zealand..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, New Zealand..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Jason Batty					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
15	DF	Ivan Vicelich					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
14	DF	Ryan Nelsen					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic		73		
4	DF	Christopher "Chris" Zoricich (c)		40			14	DF	Shaun Murphy				
5	DF	Jonathan Perry				71	2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
11	MF	Simon Elliott					8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				68
7	MF	Mark Burton					7	MF	Josip Skoko		83		
10	MF	Chris Jackson					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)				
8	MF	Aaran Lines				46	10	MF	Brett Emerton	6, 82			
17	FW	Christopher "Chris" Killen		87			17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				46
16	FW	Vaughan Coveny					20	FW	Clayton Zane				75
SUBSTITUTES													
3	DF	Sean Douglas					3	DF	Craig Moore				
6	FW	Noah Hickey				46	9	FW	John Aloisi				75
12	MF	Mark Atkinson					11	FW	David Zdrilic				46
13	MF	Heremaia "Harry" Ngata					12	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
18	DF	Scott Smith					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
19	GK	Ross Nicholson					16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
20	MF	Gerard Davis				71	19	DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto			85	68
Team Coach		Ken Dugdale					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Masayoshi Okada (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Yoshikazu Hiroshima (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Keiji Kamiara (Japan)											

FIFA has the venue as Newtown Park, Wellington.

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia will take a handy advantage into Sunday's second leg Oceania World Cup Qualifier, after defeating New Zealand 2-0 in Wellington in the first leg tonight.

A goal in each half to midfielder Brett Emerton sealed the valuable away win for the LG Socceroos, however the victory was marred by the second half send-off of replacement Danny Tiatto.

Tiatto earned the straight red card in the 85th minute for a tackle on New Zealand striker Chris Killen, however the result was already in the bag when Australia was reduced to 10-men.

The LG Socceroos took the lead in the 6th minute, Josip Skoko laying off a through ball to Stan Lazaridis, whose cross found Emerton in front of goal, a clinical finish putting the ball into the back of the net.

New Zealand's best chance of the first half was in the 30th minute when striker Vaughan Coveny broke through the defence and lined up for goal, only to have defender Tony Vidmar put in a shot-stopping tackle, the ball away for a corner.

The home side came out firing in the second half, with two shots on goal in the opening three minutes, while goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer was forced into a diving save, deflecting the ball away in the 80th minute.

The first leg was wrapped up on a defensive error by the New Zealanders just two minutes later however, goalkeeper Jason Batty attempting to clear the ball, and instead finding Brett Emerton, who neatly headed the ball into the vacant goal for Australia's second of the evening.

With the valuable 2-0 away-from-home result to take into Sunday's second leg, Australia's night was further made with the release of the latest FIFA Australia's night was further made with the release of the latest FIFA rankings.

The LG Socceroos have moved up 18 spots to #50 in the world, earning Australia the title of "Best Mover of the Month" and also giving Australia the lead in the battle for the "Best Mover of the Year" title.

It's the first time Australia has returned to the Top 50 since February 1999, with the next FIFA World rankings due to be published July 18.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, Oceania Group, Final, 2nd. Leg													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
24th. June 2001, 15.00			Stadium Australia, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)									41976	
Australia..4 v. New Zealand..1													
half time, Australia..2 v. New Zealand..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Jason Batty				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					15	DF	Ivan Vicelich				
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				37	14	DF	Ryan Nelsen				
3	DF	Craig Moore					4	DF	Christopher "Chris" Zoricich (c)				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat					5	DF	Jonathan Perry				79
8	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					11	MF	Simon Elliott				
7	MF	Josip Skoko				60	12	MF	Mark Atkinson				46
4	MF	Paul Okon (c)		5		60*	10	MF	Chris Jackson				
10	MF	Brett Emerton	37	34			6	FW	Noah Hickey				
11	FW	David Zdrilic	6, 83				17	FW	Christopher "Chris" Killen				
9	FW	John Aloisi	56				16	FW	Vaughan Coveny	44(pk)			
SUBSTITUTES													
12	GK	Zeljko Kalac					2	DF	Jonathan Taylor				
13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				60	3	DF	Sean Douglas				
14	DF	Shaun Murphy				37	9	FW	Paul Urlovic		46		46
16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				60*	13	MF	Heremaia "Harry" Ngata				
17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica					18	DF	Scott Smith				
18	MF	Scott Chipperfield					19	GK	Ross Nicholson				
20	FW	Clayton Zane					20	MF	Gerard Davis				79
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Ken Dugdale				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Kwon Jong-Chul (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 1		Kim Dae-Young (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 2		Kim Hyun-Gu (Korea Republic)											

match report from Soccer Australia

Australia is through to the final Qualifier for the 2002 FIFA World Cup, after accounting for New Zealand 4-1, in the second leg Oceania World Cup Qualifier at Stadium Australia today.

The LG Socceroos dominated from the opening whistle, with striker David Zdrilic both opening and closing the scoreline, as Australia now looks ahead to taking on the 5th placed South American team over two legs in November.

As in the first leg, Australia's opener was scored in the sixth minute, Zdrilic intercepting a ball after Craig Moore had pressured New Zealander Chris Killen into an error, and shooting low inside the right hand post.

Brett Emerton then got his name on the scoreboard for his third goal in two games, the midfielder splitting through the defence in an Australian counter-attack and shooting past New Zealand goal-keeper Jason Batty for 2-0.

The visitors pegged one back, from the penalty spot, a minute before half-time, Vaughan Coveny converting after Tony Vidmar was adjudged to have brought down Jonathan Perry in the area, but Australia regained it's two goal advantage just 11 minutes into the second half, Zdrilic knocking the ball toward goal from an Emerton cross, with John Aloisi on hand to slot the ball home.

The LG Socceroos last goal came seven minutes from time, Batty saving an initial shot from Zdrilic, only to see the striker make no mistake from the rebound, for a 4-1 final scoreline.

LG Socceroo coach Frank Farina will now almost certainly travel to South America next month, to watch the Copa America, as a prelude to possible opponents for November, with Australia's next game is set down for August, against Japan.

AFC/OFC Challenge Cup													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
15th. August 2001,			Shizuoka "Ecopa" Stadium, Fukuroi, Japan				Humid					46404	
Japan..3 v. Australia..0													
half time, Japan..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Yoshikatsu Kamaguchi (c)					12	GK	Jason Petkovic				
3	DF	Naoki Matsuda					2	DF	Luke Casserly				
4	DF	Ryuzo Morioka		42			3	DF	Stephen "Steve" Laybutt				61
16	DF	Koji Nakata					4	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat (c)				
6	MF	Toshihiro Hattori	53				14	DF	Fausto de Amicis		64		
8	MF	Hiroaki Morishima				77	6	MF	Kasey Wehrman		89		
14	MF	Teruyoshi Ito					8	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
17	MF	Kazuyuki Toda					10	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				
21	MF	Yasuhiro Hato				73	15	MF	Mark Robertson				46
9	FW	Atsushi Yanagisawa	19			62	9	FW	John Aloisi				69
22	FW	Takayuki Suzuki					11	FW	David Zdrilic				
SUBSTITUTES													
15	MF	Daisuke Oku				77	13	DF	Angelo Costanzo		91		61
12	MF	Tomokazu Myojin				73	18	MF	Constantinos "Con" Boutsianis				46
11	FW	Masashi Nakayama	65(pk)			62	20	FW	Sašo Petrovski				69
Team Coach		Philippe Troussier					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Zhang Jianjun (People's Republic of China)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from The Japan Times

A confident Japan team cruised past Australia 3-0 Wednesday at Shizuoka's Ecopa Stadium to take the inaugural AFC/OFC Challenge Cup between the champions of Asia and Oceania.

Goals from Atsushi Yanagisawa, Toshihiro Hattori and Masashi Nakayama delighted the 46,404 fans watching the first international match at the new World Cup stadium.

On a hot and humid night, Australia found it difficult to match the fitness and finesse of the Japanese players and rarely looked liked breaking down the excellent defensive trio of Naoki Matsuda, Ryuzo Morioka and Koji Nakata.

"Japan were very strong," Australian coach Frank Farina noted afterward. "Their fitness levels were much higher than our players, they moved the ball very quickly and their movement off the ball was superb - that comes from their fitness levels."

Japan coach Philippe Troussier tried to play up the significance of the match. "It was very important to win this first AFC/OFC cup and it was an honor for us to be the first to represent Asia in this competition," he stated. That said, Japan was also without several top players, including Shinji Ono, Hidetoshi Nakata and Naohiro Takahara, and the players who did turn out played a tight game and managed to stifle any creativity the Australians may have been hiding. However, the Australians did cause a few problems early on and could have gone ahead as early as the seventh minute when David Zdrilic broke free but couldn't steer his shot past Japan keeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi.

Australian defender Steve Horvat denied Yanagisawa a chance soon after, but a defensive lapse by his colleague Stephen Laybutt in the 19th minute helped turn the tide Japan's way.

Matsuda played a great ball down the right under pressure, enabling Hiroaki Morishima to spin past Horvat and cut the ball back to Yanagisawa who slotted home from 7 meters.

Yasuhiro Hato nearly made it 2-0 with a cracking shot from the right corner of the penalty area that Aussie keeper Jason Petkovic tipped against a post and Yanagisawa completed a lively first half by going close with a couple of difficult half-chances.

The second half belonged entirely to Japan and the home side went further ahead after just eight minutes of the half when Hattori burst forward and played a 1-2 with Yanagisawa before curling a right-foot shot in off the right post to make the score 2-0.

After Morishima failed to get on the end of a good ball from Suzuki, the blond bomber from Kashima (Suzuki) crashed a brilliant free-kick against the Australians' crossbar.

Then with just under half an hour left, Fausto de Amicis was adjudged to have fouled Yanagisawa as the Kashima striker attempted a difficult shot. Penalty, said the referee.

While Yanagisawa might have thought it was his to take, Troussier decided to play to his audience (perhaps he was overly impressed with the "I love Troussier" banner opposite the Japanese bench).

With Masashi "The Human Pinball" Nakayama ready to come on, Troussier yanked Yanagisawa off and told the Jubilo star to take the penalty, which he blasted home to run the score up to 3-0.

"I think that Nakayama is a symbol of Japanese football," the Frenchman explained. "I thought it was wonderful that the penalty came just as Nakayama was ready to come on. I thought it was an important moment.

I saw the light and thought it was Nakayama's chance. It doesn't mean that I didn't want Yanagisawa to take it. I told him it was an opportunity for me to give to Nakayama and I think he understood that."

When asked if he thought he might have hurt Yanagisawa's feelings, Troussier retorted: "If he's not happy, that's not my problem. Football is not a game for boys, it's a game for professionals. It's a serious job and the players get paid for that. I can't be disturbed with the sentiments of each one."

Yanagisawa said he didn't realize what was going on at first. "I thought the bench was telling me to take the kick. Then I realized the signals were that Gon-san (Nakayama) was coming on. The supporters were eager for him to take the kick, so I wasn't disappointed."

As the game dragged out to its inevitable conclusion, the Australians managed two good chances. A sweeping move upfield was halted with a fabulous tackle from S-Pulse defender Ryuzo Morioka, while Kasey Wehrman fluffed a golden opportunity with a free header from 5 meters out. But by then, the game had already been decided. All it required was for the visitors to try and kick a few more lumps out of Suzuki and for the victors to hold on for a well-deserved victory.

Team rosters:

Japan - Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi, Toshihiro Hattori, Ryuzo Morioka, Yasuhiro Hato (73, Tomokazu Myojin), Naoki Matsuda, Koji Nakata, Hiroaki Morishima (81, Daisuke Oku), Teruyoshi Ito, Kazuyuki Toda, Takayuki Suzuki, Atsushi Yanagisawa (64, Masashi Nakayama).

Australia - Jason Petkovic, Luke Casserly, Steve Horvat, Stephen Laybutt (60, Angelo Costanzo), Fausto de Amicis, Mark Robertson (45, Con Boutsianis), Scott Chipperfield, Kasey Wehrman, Steve Corica, John Aloisi (68, Sasho Petrovski), David Zdrilic

Date & Time			Venue				Weather		Temperature		Attendance		
11th. November 2001,			Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Victoria				Rain				53173		
Australia..1 v. France..1													
half time, Australia..1 v. France..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Mark Schwarzer					16	GK	Fabien Alain Barthez				
	DF	Shaun Murphy					19	DF	Christian Lali Karembeu				
	DF	Craig Moore	43				18	DF	Franck Alain James "Frank" Leboeuf				
	DF	Kevin Muscat		55		58	8	DF	Marcel Desailly (c)				83
	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					2	DF	Vincent Philippe Antoine Candela				
	MF	Brett Emerton					13	MF	Claude Makéléle Sinda				65
	MF	Josip Skoko				73	7	MF	Robert Emmanuel Pirès				
	MF	Paul Okon					4	MF	Patrick Vieira				
	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					10	MF	Zinedine Yazid Zidane				80
	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell					20	FW	David Sergio Trezeguet				65*
	FW	Mark Viduka					21	FW	Christophe Jérôme Dugarry				58
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	John Aloisi				58	5	DF	Mikaël Samy Silvestre				83
	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				73	11	FW	Sylvain Claude Wiltord				58
							6	MF	Éric Carrière				65
								FW	Nicolas Sébastien Anelka				65*
									Alain Boghossian				80
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Roger León Maurice Lemerre Desprez				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Simon Micallef (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Thomas Esamie

Remarkably this friendly match has not suffered late withdrawals due to "injury" at the behest of european club sides reluctant to see their employees undertake a tiring journey to Australia.

Certainly there was no shortage of controversy regarding the club vs country issue with Arsene Wenger of Arsenal gathering support from 14 clubs to petition FIFA to intervene. FIFA then suggested France and Australia limit their selections to one player per club. Both the FFF and Soccer Australia declined to participate in such a scheme, Australia in particular needs some match practice ahead of their match against the as yet unknown South American side.

Both sides were, arguably, fielding their best sides. On Australia's part much was made of the fact Harry Kewell was named to partner Viduka up front instead of an attacking midfield role as he plays for Leeds.

In wet conditions Zidane took France's first corner 3 minutes in, the second moments after, and Australia still had not had any possession. The exercise in "keep ball" certainly wouldn't bother the Australians if France failed to profit from it, but it certainly unsettled the crowd. When Australia did get the ball, eventually, you could see they were overeager to do something with it and in the rush gave up possession too easily. Australia did manage to settle a little and earnt a free kick near the corner of the penalty box which Lazaridis drove as hard as he could towards goal.

France's first shot of note came after 10 minutes and stung the hands of Schwarzer before being cleared away. Soon after a header required a save, but was ruled offside in any case. France looked intent on erasing any memories of their defeat at the hands of Australia earlier this year. That aside the French ended up winning the Confederations Cup with a truly unremarkable team and Australia managed only third.

The rain persisted and made conditions difficult for players and keepers alike. It did detract from the quality of the game with players struggling to keep a firm footing and Mark Schwarzer having clearances slice off his foot and electing to punch balls rather than risk catching them.

After 28 minutes Australia managed to get a corner thanks to some persistence by Kewell. Zidane cleared the incoming ball with his heel raised behind his back and propelled it in front of him. Even if he didn't mean to do it it was impressive.

Just after Josip Skoko frightened the life out of Arsene Wenger with a tackle on Vieira. Australia broke free from the restart of play and Kewell put Emerton through with an offside trap beating pass. Emerton then saw his shot tipped over the bar by Barthez who was flying through the air to reach the shot.

Just minutes before halftime an innocuous throw-in reached Harry Kewell (who was in an offside position if it hadn't been for a throw-in) who won a corner. The corner by Lazaridis was flicked on by Vidmar on the near post and Craig Moore headed it in for an unlikely goal.

This marked a tumultuous few minutes where Australia produced another break resulting in a chance for Kewell who volleyed over the bar and a minor scuffle involving several players from both sides before a French corner was taken. The French eventually won another but the referee called for a trip to the change rooms before the second corner could be taken.

Whatever Roger Lemerre said at halftime worked as they came out firing and withing 4 minutes equalised. Pires was the main instigator, a run down the left was continued with a wall pass to beat the offside trap and the ball centred inside the 6-yard-box for Trezeguet to score. For the first time in three matches there was more than one goal in a match between these two countries. Both were hoping for at least a third.

Ten minutes into the second half a tackle by Muscat on Dugarry resulted in another scuffle which even involved some of the bench players. Later it was reported that Dugarry had indeed torn his knee ligaments.

Muscat got a yellow card for his troubles but you got a sense that there was more at play than the indignation of a poor tackle on a teammate in the reactions of Dugarrys teammates. Farina immediately substituted Muscat with Aloisi, Wiltord came on for Dugarry. The reason for the substitutions stemmed from the same event but for very different reasons.

Several changes were made by the French after this period and while the fresh legs gave the French more enthusiasm there was an equal part of loss of cohesion. The match became at once more open and paradoxically one got the feeling more goals were unlikely.

Little of any real consequence ensued, the odd half-chance, a close offside, a timely tackle all contributing the chaff which you expect to see. By this time the rain had also played havoc with the surface of the ground with little splashes everytime the ball bounced and passes being slowed with mini rooster tails behind the ball as it traversed the pitch.

The match more or less closed with a shot from Vieira sailing about a metre over the bar and John Aloisi being pushed over inside the penalty box without any favours coming from the local referee.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, CONMEBOL-OFC play-off, 1st. leg													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
20th. November 2001, 20.15			Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Victoria									84656	
Australia..1 v. Uruguay..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Uruguay..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Héctor Fabián Carini Hernández				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat	79(pk)	85			2	DF	Washington Eduardo Tais Videgain				
14	DF	Shaun Murphy					3	DF	Daniel Alejandro Lembo Betancor				
3	DF	Craig Moore					4	DF	Paolo Rónald Montero Iglesias (c)				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					6	DF	Octavio Dario Rodríguez Peña		34		
7	MF	Brett Emerton					8	MF	Gonzalo de los Santos da Rosa			68	
4	MF	Paul Okon (c)					5	MF	Pablo Gabriel García Pérez				
8	MF	Josip Skoko					7	MF	Gianni Bismark Guigou Martínez				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				46	20	MF	Álvaro Alexander Recoba Rivero				
9	FW	Mark Viduka					11	FW	Gerardo Federico Magallanes González				72
10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell					19	FW	Ernesto Javier Chevantón Espinosa				77
SUBSTITUTES													
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					9	FW	Diego Martín Alonso López				
12	GK	Zeljko Kalac					10	FW	Andrés Nicolás "Nico" Olivera				
13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					12	GK	Gustavo Adolfo Munúa Vera				
16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat					14	DF	Joe Émerson Bizera Bastos				
17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica					15	FW	Mario Ignacio Regueiro Pintos				77
18	FW	Paul Agostino				46	16	MF	Guillermo Gonzalo Giacomazzi Suárez				72
21	FW	John Aloisi					18	FW	Richard Javier Morales Aguirre				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Victor Haroldo Púa Sosa				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Graziano Cesare (Italy)											
Assistant Referee 1		Marco Ivaldi (Italy)											
Assistant Referee 2		Aniello di Marco (Italy)											

match report from Thomas Esamie

The last meeting between these two sides also ended in a 1-0 win to Australia at the 1997 Confederations Cup.

The last time Uruguay came to Australia to play, Australia had already qualified for the World Cup in 1974. To complete the picture Australia won and drew in 1974, lost to Uruguay 2-0 in Montevideo in 1992 and beat them with a golden goal in 1997. From that 1997 match many players from both sides remain to play today, also the Uruguayan coach remains.

Australia had to wait until the final round of matches of the CONMEBOL qualifiers was completed before their opponent was finally determined. This meant preparation time was short not only tactically but also logistically. In the end Uruguay became the 5th placed nation in the qualifiers by drawing 1-1 to Argentina and Colombia's 4-0 win fell narrowly short of displacing Uruguay for 5th. The other possible contender for 5th place, Brazil, scored an emphatic win to avoid Australia.

The late conclusion of the matches in South America meant the game was moved from a weekend date to a Tuesday night, as a compromise between the wishes of Australia and Uruguay.

When the match got underway it seemed clear that Uruguay playing away, and missing their trump card Dario Silva, had it in mind to avoid trouble first and take advantage of any opportunities that might arise second. Indeed the first goal attempt was a piece of extreme audacity when Alvaro Recoba tried to lob Schwarzer from halfway. To Recoba's credit it took a rapidly backpedalling keeper and a wobbly catch to ensure the ball stayed out of Australia's net.

After around 5 minutes Australia won their first corner which was taken by Stan Lazaridis. The ball swung out and was met firmly by Craig Moore at the far post, Carini flew up and tipped the ball over the bar. It was to be the first of many corners for Australia but none would be as productive as that one. Whether the Uruguayan defence should be credited with some solid defence against what is considered one of Australia's strengths, or whether Australia were useless at set pieces is not clear.

A lot of what Australia did was bright and enterprising, right up until it came to the final pass or shot. It seemed that Australia were taking the possession approach, when the option of a thrust forward was there it was not taken. This early in the game it was probably part of the plan. Uruguay too were keen on holding the ball but had a bit more adventure in their forward play. For all of the talk of Kewell and Lazaridis taking defenders on it seemed a rare event that they did.

Uruguay too had their share of close shaves with a timely tackle or the linesman saving Australia's blushes.

For all the pre-match hype about the "physical" nature of Uruguay's play the game was played in the fairest manner. Much more civil than those phlegmatic French. A Dario Rodrigues foul from behind on Harry Kewell earned the first yellow of the match and after over half an hour of the game had elapsed.

At the conclusion of the first half the general impression was that Australia had the better of play, perhaps the 8-0 count of corners to Australia was some testament to that.

The halftime introduction of Agostino for Lazaridis, pushing Kewell to the left generally improved the look of Australia as a threat and one continues to wonder why Frank Farina persists with Kewell up front when most pundits agree he is better down the flank, running at defenders.

At the fifty minute mark an Okon foul gave Uruguay a free kick in harmless territory but Recoba's long kick found a majestically rising de los Santos square on the forehead. It would have probably been a goal had the header not been misdirected 2 metres wide of the post.

Recoba was at the heart of most things good about Uruguay and the rumours that Dario Silva would return for the second leg after initially being ruled out smelt both of fear on the part of Uruguay and danger to Australia.

As the half wore on Harry was making more and more of his runs and with both Agostino and Viduka to aim at there was a great deal more potential, but at the same time Uruguay too were making a much better fist of making Schwarzer earn his clean sheet. Recoba, again, shooting at goal from the byline and forcing Schwarzer into conceding only the second corner for Uruguay being a perfect illustration of what can happen.

A free kick for a foul on Agostino on 65 minutes was taken by Kewell near the flag and proved another close call as Carini could only palm the ball a few metres and two successive overhead bicycle kicks, from first Murphy and then Agostino, failed to find the net. Barely two minutes later Viduka lunged at a ball which was eventually claimed by Carini and three blue shirts stood over Viduka in what at first seemed like the start of some distasteful scene but nothing happened, and the three just ensured it was Carini who had a firm hold of the ball and then walked off to let Viduka sort himself out.

The flow was very much going towards the blue end of the pitch, and Harry Kewell beat the offside trap and again, sent the ball into the vicinity of the penalty spot where Agostino got his head to the ball despite the close attentions of a defender and beat Carini. Sadly the join of the crossbar and post prevented one thing all but a handful of the stadium were praying for. Every failed chance starting to stretch the tension to yet unexplored levels and it was fairly well accepted anything but a win was not going to be enough to go to Montevideo with for Australia. Now there were less than 20 minutes left and some very presentable opportunities had stayed out.

Eventually it came. Again Kewell to the left had made space and crossed the ball quickly to the space in front of Agostino charging through on goal. Agostino had, minutes earlier, seen a header from a corner glance off his head and go wide...this time too he could not put the ball in the net but it was due to a push from I don't know who. The roar of the crowd was huge, the importance of the moment not lost on any of them.

Quickly though it died down because we had no goal yet, and more to the point who would take the kick? In the end it was Muscat, who was at unbackable odds to get booked in this game after his performance against France, who stepped up. Penalties and Australia are not always good friends and in this case too Muscat's sidefooted shot down the middle had more to thank from Carini's dive to the right of goal than any technique. Nevertheless the moment was sheer bliss. The worries of all the world fell away and the crowd flew on the crest of the sound as it rose from the heart of every Australian to celebrate this moment when a Melbourne boy stuck the ball into the net and gave Australia the lead in a final qualifying tie, once again.

The final ten or so minutes were a mix of terror and joy. The crowd washed sound from one side to another, chanting, cheering, ohh-ing and ahh-ing and at the last whistling pleas to have the referee imitate them.

A last minute corner to Uruguay was met by Alejandro Lembo who headed just wide. Many hearts missed a beat and it was not lost on anyone that the game was only just reaching halftime even though the clock was over 90 minutes. That said the final whistle came and the cheer of the crowd was just reward for a performance which was the best result for Australia in the ultimate tie for a world cup berth since the last time we made it, in 1973.

World Cup, Qualifying Round, CONMEBOL-OFC play-off, 2nd. leg													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
25th. November 2001, 16.00			Estadio Centenario, Montevideo, Uruguay								62000		
Uruguay..3 v. Australia..0													
half time, Uruguay..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Héctor Fabián Carini Hernández		90+3			1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Washington Eduardo Tais Videgain					2	DF	Kevin Muscat		32		73
3	DF	Daniel Alejandro Lembo Betancor					14	DF	Shaun Murphy				81
4	DF	Paolo Rónald Montero Iglesias (c)					3	DF	Craig Moore				
6	DF	Octavio Dario Rodríguez Peña					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
5	MF	Pablo Gabriel García Pérez		66			7	MF	Brett Emerton				
7	MF	Gianni Bismark Guigou Martinez					4	MF	Paul Okon (c)				
20	MF	Álvaro Alexander Recoba Rivero					8	MF	Josip Skoko				
9	FW	Dario Debray Silva Pereira	14	81		82	11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
10	FW	Mario Ignacio Regueiro Pintos		37		74	9	FW	Mark Viduka				
11	FW	Gerardo Federico Magallanes González				65	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
SUBSTITUTES													
8	MF	Gonzalo de los Santos da Rosa		80		74	12	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
12	GK	Gustavo Adolfo Munúa Vera					13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
14	DF	Gonzalo Sorondo Amaro				82	16	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat				
15	MF	Guillermo Gonzalo Giacomazzi Suárez					17	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				
16	FW	Andrés Nicolás "Nico" Olivera					18	FW	Paul Agostino				
18	FW	Richard Javier Morales Aguirre	70, 90	70		65	21	FW	John Aloisi				
19	FW	Diego Martin Alonso López					22	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
Team Coach		Victor Haroldo Púa Sosa					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Ali Mohamed Bujsaim (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ahmed Yagqob Mohamed (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 2		Ali Abdulla Makhlof (United Arab Emirates)											

match report from Thomas Esamie

This match started just after the full time whistle of the first leg. Both teams flew out the day after the Melbourne match, on the same flights to Buenos Aires. Since Australia had made the bookings a lot earlier than their opponents it was the Socceroos almost exclusively occupying First and Business Class while the bulk of the Uruguay team was sitting in economy.

Once at Buenos Aires, Uruguay had a government chartered flight to Montevideo, while the Socceroos had to wait for a connection, and once at the airport in Montevideo they had to contend with a small group of overenthusiastic Uruguay supporters who jostled and spat at the Aussies. That incident was probably met with as much disgust in Uruguay as it was in Australia and amid threats of moving to neutral venues and demands for more security I suspect the players were glad to be out of the focus of the media for a while.

Interesting too that Dario Silva, initially thought to be out for months after injuring his shoulder in the final group match against Argentina, was now looking like a certain starter.

Eight years ago Frank Farina came to the River Plate Stadium as a player looking to make something of the 1-1 draw in Sydney against Argentina. This time, as coach, he has a 1-0 win behind him and the site of the first ever World Cup final as the venue.

Inside the first minute Brett Emerton skewed an acute shot at goal off the side of his foot. It would have been asking too much for it to go in but it was grossly mistimed. Sixty seconds later Rodriguez volleyed a shot from outside the penalty area which came much closer (sailed over the bar). So inside those first minutes you got a pretty good idea of how the match went. Australia butchered what chances they made and Uruguay eventually made theirs pay.

The referee too needs mention. He was firm, fair and usually correct. An early example was a tackle involving Tais. Tais was shouldered off the ball, fell and clutched the ball wriggled a little and wanted to see a yellow card for his opponent. The referee gave Australia a free kick for handball. There were also examples in the other direction.

Dario Silva, despite his injury, was probably the difference. His mere presence seemed to lift the team in the same way a Maradona or a Chilavert might. After about 7 minutes he was fashioning a chance for himself, heard a whistle and stopped. Sadly for him the whistle hadn't come from the referee and Dario raised his hands at the crowd as if to say "you want to make that any harder for me?"

He and Recoba seemed to test the Aussie goal at every opportunity in what reflected their attacking lineup. Recoba even hit the near post from a corner. Skoko was standing guard there so it wasn't really a serious chance at goal.

However, soon after another Australia pass went astray as they were trying to build a road to goal, and after the Uruguayans kicked around, a little a long ball forward found Silva perfectly and with Murphy right there trying to stop him Silva managed to squeeze a shot across the goal, just wide of Schwarzers outstretched hand and just inside the far post. A clinical goal fashioned from nothing very much but executed by a team who had been playing pressure games for most of the past 6 months as opposed to Australia who were not very battlehardened at all. Uruguay had now only effectively drawn level but there were still 76 minutes left. Stung into action Australia managed a good chance thanks to a trademark Lazaridis raid down the left and a cross which found Kewell's head. Australia might have equalised then but a combination of an alert keeper diving to save the shot and possibly a lack of enough power and direction of the header itself contrived to keep Uruguay ahead. Australia really only needed one goal and Uruguay would need three to win though. As it turned out Uruguay got their three in the end anyway.

A rare free kick for Australia a quarter of the way through the match was taken by Kewell and went narrowly over. If the rarity of the kicks was due to Uruguayan discipline or an inability of Australia to get near the Uruguay goal wasn't clear. Straight after Uruguay got the benefit of an offside decision and eventually scrambled the ball towards goal but just as it was about to cross the line (about a metre above ground level) it was cleared with a spectacular bicycle kick by Shaun Murphy. Replays showed he had saved Tony Vidmar's blushes who had miskicked the ball towards his own goal. Uruguay briefly claimed the ball had crossed the line but since the clearance went out for a corner it seems unlikely.

The cheer from the crowd as the goal was scored by Silva was almost repeated when Muscat was given a yellow card for a tackle from behind as Regueiro was about to turn him. The would have been surpassed as a fiendishly quick Silva ran the ball to the goal line and pulled it back across the penalty box where Magallanes was running onto the ball only to be thwarted by Schwarzer coming out and spreading himself at Magallanes' feet as the latter took his shot.

Just before the half was out Kewell managed to get a run at the defence and got through out wide, then crossed the ball back to Viduka whose shot clattered into a defender. Kewell himself could do little better deep into injury time in the first half as a shot from just outside the area caught a defenders foot and dribbled harmlessly into the arms of the goalkeeper.

The second half was starting to get sleepy when Guigou got the ball and as he came to the goal the Australian defenders backed off. Accepting the invitation he launched the ball goalwards but wasn't accurate enough to cause and change in the scoreline. Josip Skoko returned the favour from a little further out and missed by a little less.

Kewell almost managed to score on 63 minutes after chesting (though there was evidence to say arming) the ball down and volleying the shot over the bar. Less than a minute later Viduka couldn't adjust quickly enough and was forced to head a long throw after it had looped over the defenders and bounced on the ground. The ball glanced off Viduka's head and flew over the bar.

In response Uruguay made some changes and in what seemed like a flurry of activity. Schwarzer started to complain about missiles coming onto the pitch (whatever it was they were small) and Garcia got a yellow card after a messy passage of play with commentators suggesting something went on in backplay.

In the 70th minute Uruguay broke free and created a three-on-three opportunity with Recoba on the ball. Mindful of his talents Murphy and Moore tackled him and conceded a free kick a few metres outside the corner of the Australian penalty area. Recoba planted the ball sent it into the vicinity of the 6 yard box where the recent (and tall) substitute Morales headed the ball into goal, all Schwarzer could do was parry the ball into the roof of the net. Suddenly Uruguay were going to the World Cup and knowing this Morales took off his shirt and more or less completed a lap of the stadium. The referee waited for him with a yellow card. It didn't look like he cared.

Farina now put on Agostino to replace Muscat in a goal hunting exercise and Pua put in de los Santos in an effort to close any options Australia might have thought of creating. In amongst all this Uruguay almost got a third goal but could not repeat the angle which Silva had found in the first half.

Carini then saved Uruguay's bacon 10 minutes from time as an Australian corner came to Shaun Murphy who headed it perfectly but was intercepted just before it crossed the goalline by Carini who palmed it over the bar.

In the flurry which followed de los Santos was booked for kicking the ball away and Silva, intriguingly, for refusing to be replaced. I guess it counts as time wasting. While Uruguay was bringing defenders on, Australia were taking them off. Australia tried valiantly, got a few half decent chances and had they got a bit of luck could well have changed the outcome of the tie.

As it was Uruguay got Australia on a suckerpunch and Recoba danced his way around the defence on a break, picked out Morales in front of the goal who simply tapped it into the net to settle the matter. Carini got a yellow for timewasting even though Australia would need to score twice for anything to change.

Well done Uruguay, they played like a team who knew what was required and simply did it.

2002

Date & Time		Venue					Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
5th. June 2002,		Seymour Shaw Park, Miranda, Sydney,											
Manly Warringah Dolphins..0 v. Australia..4													
half time,													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK							GK					
Team Coach							Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Date & Time		Venue					Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
??th. June 2002,		Seymour Shaw Park, Miranda, Sydney,											
Rockdale City Suns..0 v. Australia..1													
half time,													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK							GK					
Team Coach							Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Date & Time				Venue				Weather				Temperature		Attendance	
21st. June 2002, 19.00				Seymour Shaw Park, Miranda, Sydney,											
Sutherland Select XI..0 v. Australia..4															
half time,															
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution		
START LIST															
	GK							GK							
									Dylan Macallister	X					
									Ante Milicic	X					
		David Ratcliffe (c)							Greg Owens	X					
									Tom Pondeljak	X					
Team Coach		Gary Phillips					Team Coach		Frank Farina						
Team Manager							Team Manager								
Referee															
Assistant Referee 1															
Assistant Referee 2															

Squads as shown in the St.George & Sutherland Leader, 20/6/2002, page 83

FARINA'S DEVELOPMENT: Jade North, Andrew Packer, Ante Juric, Greg Owens, Ante Milicic, Paul Kohler, Dylan Macallister (all Olympic Sharks), Robert Middleby, Michael Prentice (Newcastle United), Angelo Costanzo, Grant Last, Michael Beauchamp (Marconi Stallions), Paul Henderson (Northern Spirit).

SUTHERLAND SELECT: Chris Sidel, Tim Cadden, Cash Noble, Brad Hethernans (St.Pats), Todd Caldwell, Andrew McDonald, Michael Stuart (Engadine Crusaders), Steve Musso, Alan James, Chris Bloor (Gymea), David Ratcliffe, Dylan Curtis, Rodney Quann (Cronulla RSL), Daniel Egan (Grays Point), Matthew Merril (Menai), Shayne Passini (Lilli Pilli) and Andrew Paine (Georges River).

match report from the St.George & Sutherland Leader, 27/6/2002, page 81

For young and old, soccer has taken centre stage right across the country.

Just after Friday night's big World Cup clash was won by Brazil over England, some of Australia's best took to the field at Seymour Shaw Park, Miranda.

Australian soccer coach Frank Farina was on hand to watch a game between his Oceania Cup trialists and a Sutherland Select side, hosted by Sutherland District Soccer Club.

With eight players from this year's NSL premiers Olympic Sharks in Farina's side, the Sutherland team led by former Socceroo David Ratcliffe, was always going to do it tough.

However, they put up a solid enough effort in an entertaining game before going down 4-0 (including two penalties), with Olympic's Dylan Macallister, Ante Milicic, Greg Owens and Tom Pondeljak the scorers.

The Farina squad will play two more trials against NSW state teams this week at Penrith and Campbelltown before the Australian Socceroo team is selected for the Oceania Nations Cup.

"These trials are important fixtures in our preparations," Farina said. "We haven't had the ideal lead-up to the tournament with the lads being out of season for at least a month. Although we haven't settled on a final team yet, players like Angelo Costanzo, Jade North, Ante Juric, Ante Milicic, Damian Mori and Tom Pondeljak, will all be fighting for a position."

Date & Time		Venue					Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
??th. June 2002,		Penrith, New South Wales											
?????..? v. Australia..?													
half time,													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK							GK					
Team Coach							Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Date & Time		Venue					Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
??th. June 2002,		Campbelltown, New South Wales											
?????..? v. Australia..?													
half time,													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK							GK					
Team Coach							Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
6th. July 2002,			Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand (Mt.Smart Stadium)								1000		
Vanuatu..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, Vanuatu..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	David Chilia		41			1	GK	Jason Petkovic				
4	DF	Wilkins Simon Lauru					2	DF	Fausto de Amicis				
5	DF	Lexa Bule Bibi					3	DF	Jade North				
12	DF	Graham Demas					4	DF	Mehmet Duraković				
16	DF	Daniel Koko Alick					5	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat (c)				
6	MF	Willie August Marango					6	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo		40		
9	MF	Seimata Chilia					13	DF	Milan Blagojevic				
11	MF	Maki Gerard Haitong				85	11	MF	Scott Chipperfield		5		72
15	MF	Pita David Maki				64	12	MF	Tomislav "Tom" Pondeljak				62
10	FW	Etienne Mermer					9	FW	Damian Mori	69			
14	FW	Richard Iwai				60	15	FW	Anthony "Ante" Milicic				62*
SUBSTITUTES													
17	MF	Alphonse Welin Qorig				85	7	MF	Robert "Robbie" Middleby				72
18	MF	Jean Robert Yelou				60	10	FW	Slobodan "Bobby" Despotovski	85			62
19	MF	Philip Tom Tomake				64	16	FW	Paolo "Paul" Trimboli				62*
8	DF	Ali Silas Silas					14	DF	Angelo Costanzo				
2	DF	Ken Masauvakalo					17	DF	Ante Juric				
3	DF	Manley Tabe					8	FW	Joel Porter				
7	DF	Fedy Vava					18	GK	Dean Anastasiadis				
13	FW	Sandy Alick											
20	GK	John Garae											
Team Coach		Juan Carlos Buzzetti					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Charles Ariotima (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 1		Michel Angot (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 2		Tevita Vea (Tonga)											

match report from Peter Rees

Socceroos coach Frank Farina acknowledged the gap with the island nations was indeed closing but was satisfied his side was able to hold their shape and discipline against an impressive Vanuatu side at Ericsson Stadium on Saturday.

The young Vanuatu team had a fair amount of possession but was unable to convert this into points, while the Socceroos were able to absorb the pressure to score two late goals through Damien Mori and Bobby Despotovski. To Vanuatu's credit they dominated in the midfield exchanges which surprised everybody except Farina and captain Steve Horvat who both admitted afterwards that they knew exactly what to expect going by the team's last meeting two years ago in Papeete, Tahiti.

Vanuatu coach Carlos Buzzetti was hugely disappointed to have conceded goals late in the game after being on equal terms for much of the match. However, he commended his players for their effort and set his sights on winning the remaining two group matches to hopefully qualify for the semi-finals.

For Vanuatu, Wilkins Simon Lauru had an impressive all-round game with goalkeeper David Chilia also showing his experience. Farina said there would be changes after this game due to the busy schedule that sees three matches in five days.

Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
8th. July 2002,			Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand (Mt.Smart Stadium)								200		
New Caledonia..0 v. Australia..11													
half time, New Caledonia..0 v. Australia..5													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Michel Hne					18	GK	Dean Anastasiadis				
2	DF	Théodore Pian					3	DF	Jade North				
5	DF	Jean-Marc Casé (c)					4	DF	Mehmet Duraković				
14	DF	André Sinédo				53	5	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat (c)	14			46
6	MF	Gil Elmour					13	DF	Milan Blagojevic				
13	MF	Robert Kauma				64	14	DF	Angelo Costanzo	82			
7	MF	Yves Faye					17	DF	Ante Juric				
10	MF	Marius Mapou					7	MF	Robert "Robbie" Middleby				
16	MF	Jacques Dahoté					11	MF	Scott Chipperfield	21, 35			46*
12	FW	Pierre Tidjine				40	9	FW	Damian Mori	34			59
9	FW	Iamel Kabeu					10	FW	Slobodan "Bobby" Despotovski	3, 55(pk), 75, 77			
SUBSTITUTES													
8	DF	Steeven Longue				40	6	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				46
17	MF	Maurice Cawa				64	8	FW	Joel Porter	86			59
15	DF	Ricardo Nepamondou				53	16	FW	Paolo "Paul" Trimboli	91			46*
4	DF	Franck Oiremoïn											
18	FW	David Hay											
3	DF	Alain Kecine											
11	MF	Stone Longue											
20	GK	Justin Dawano											
Team Coach		Martingengo Serge de Novack					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Derek Rugg (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tevita Vea (Tonga)											
Assistant Referee 2		John Berry (New Zealand)											

some reports have Franck Oiremoïn playing in place of Theodore Pian, and David Hay playing in place of Iamel Kabeu.

match report from Peter Rees

Australian Socceroos coach Frank Farina was not getting carried away with his side's comprehensive 11-0 win over New Caledonia at Ericsson Stadium on Monday night.

He remarked afterwards the win itself was more important than the amount of goals scored. The score perhaps did not reflect fairly on the New Caledonians who did show touches of flair and even launched a few attacks of their own. Captain Jean Marc Case was one of the standouts in both attack and defence.

Farina's troops were clinical in their finishing but were helped by the New Caledonians reluctance to apply themselves fully in defence, which saw some gift goals handed to the Socceroos.

Farina added he was most pleased with his player's concentration and discipline. "The other most pleasing aspect was they did the simple things well," he said.

Debutant Bobby Depotovski was the star of the match scoring four goals. The Socceroos only overseas-based player Scott Chipperfield was also impressive with a brace of goals to his name.

New Caledonia coach Martinengo Serge De Novack was visibly disappointed with his team's performance claiming the Socceroos were just "too big and too fast" and were constantly on the ball which made it difficult for his players. He explained his team was unable to cope with the level of play the Socceroos were playing at. The Socceroos certainly looked a better side than the one that struggled to a 2-0 win over Vanuatu in their first match.

Oceanian Nations Cup, Finals, Group A													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
10th. July 2002,			Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand (Mt.Smart Stadium)								1000		
Fiji..0 v. Australia..8													
half time, Fiji..0 v. Australia..5													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Laisena Tuba				22	1	GK	Jason Petkovic				
2	DF	Viliame Dawai Toma					2	DF	Fausto de Amicis	89			
5	DF	Valerio Nasema					5	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat (c)				46
17	DF	Malakai Kainihewe				68	6	DF	Patrick Kisorbo				
13	MF	Meli Delai					14	DF	Angelo Costanzo				52
10	MF	Keni Doidoi					17	DF	Ante Juric	36			
18	MF	Ratu Veresa Toma		18			11	MF	Scott Chipperfield				59
4	MF	Seveci Rokotakala					12	MF	Tomislav "Tom" Pondeljak				
7	MF	Manoa Masi					8	FW	Joel Porter	8, 13, 44, 53			
15	MF	Stewart Bola					15	FW	Anthony "Ante" Milicic	5			
9	FW	Josaia Sauturaga Bukalidi				59	16	FW	Paolo "Paul" Trimboli	47			
SUBSTITUTES													
20	GK	Luke Tavuyara				22	4	DF	Mehmet Duraković				46
8	DF	Emosi Baleinuku				68	7	MF	Robert "Robbie" Middleby				59
12	FW	Esala Masi (c)				59	13	DF	Milan Blagojevic				52
14	DF	Jope Leka Namawa											
11	DF	Lorima Dau											
19	FW	Sailesh Samy Bula											
3	DF	Ovini Duguca											
16	MF	Apenisa Qereqeretabua											
Team Coach		Billy Singh					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Joakim Sosongan (Papua New Guinea)											
Assistant Referee 1		John Berry (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Gray Vuke (Vanuatu)											

Some sources have Lorima Dau in the starting line-up for Fiji.

match report from Peter Rees

Veteran Fiji coach Billy Singh expressed disappointment at the lack of commitment shown by his players as they were put to the sword by an efficient Australian team at Ericsson Stadium on Wednesday night.

The Socceroos inflicted one of the heaviest defeats Fiji has suffered scoring eight unanswered goals; young Joel Porter scoring four goals. With that victory, Australia easily takes out Group A honours and now advances to Friday's semi-final against Group B runner up Tahiti.

Singh indicated he may call it a day after a successful fifteen year reign, but told reporters at the after match press conference that the right candidate must be found first. Reports link former Australian coach Les Scheinflug to the job but that has yet to be confirmed. However, Singh was searching for answers to his team's lacklustre performance. He said the players were provided "incentives" to win. He described the current team as better than the one that pushed the Socceroos close at last year's World Cup Qualifiers, but the difference was last year's team showed more commitment.

Singh admitted it had been hard to motivate the team after their loss to Vanuatu and especially after Vanuatu beat New Caledonia in the early match. That meant Fiji could not settle for a draw but had to win.

Captain Esala Masi was also disappointed with the team's performance and hinted a changing of the guard was on the cards if Fiji was to regain its status as the top island nation.

Frank Farina said the team was a different side to the one he faced last year and indicated that Singh's troops may have been deflated mentally after the loss to Vanuatu a few days earlier.

Again, he expressed satisfaction with the commitment of his players. The Socceroos have certainly ironed out any deficiencies exposed by Vanuatu in their first match and are going from strength to strength.

On attack they are as clinical as a surgeon's knife and on defence their goal has rarely been threatened.

On scoring four goals, Joel Porter said he was "ecstatic" with his performance and remarked it is a "honour to be here."

Oceanian Nations Cup, Semi-Final													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
12th. July 2002,			Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand (Mt.Smart Stadium)			Rain					400		
Tahiti..1 v. Australia..2 after extra time (sudden death)													
half time, Tahiti..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
20	GK	Xavier Samin					1	GK	Jason Petkovic				
17	DF	Vetea Angelo Tchen		49		62	2	DF	Fausto de Amicis				51
5	DF	Sylvain Boeene					3	DF	Jade North				
12	DF	Harry Tong Sang					4	DF	Mehmet Duraković	88			
2	DF	Steeve Fatupua-Lecaill					13	DF	Milan Blagojevic				65
7	DF	Samuel Garcia					14	DF	Angelo Costanzo		82		
6	MF	Tetahio Auraa					17	DF	Ante Juric				
8	MF	Daniel Teva Zaveroni					11	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
13	MF	Abel Terevarua					12	MF	Tomislav "Tom" Pondeljak		66		
9	FW	Félix Tagawa		53		93	9	FW	Damian Mori	96			
11	FW	Naea Tommy Irving Bennett					10	FW	Slobodan "Bobby" Despotovski				51*
SUBSTITUTES													
10	FW	Tony Senechal				62	7	MF	Robert "Robbie" Middleby				51
19	FW	Gabriel Wajoka				93	8	FW	Joel Porter				51*
16	GK	Daniel Tapeta					16	FW	Paolo "Paul" Trimboli				65
4	DF	Vehia Maurirere											
14	MF	Geiamano Guyon											
18	FW	Raimoana Stephen Patrick Bennett											
15	MF	Larry Marmouyet											
3	DF	lotua Kautai											
Team Coach		Patrick Jacquemet					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Derek Rugg (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		John Berry (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Gray Vuke (Vanuatu)											

match report from Peter Rees

The reigning Oceania champs Australia almost contemplated an embarrassing scenario in playing for the third and fourth place playoff preceding Sunday's final. However, in bizarre circumstances two minutes from full-time, Tahitian goalkeeper Xavier Samin - who had been brilliant all night - failed to control a shot taken from a free kick, which allowed Mehmed Durakovic to follow up and slot the shot home saving the Socceroos from their worst ever defeat since 1988.

Super-sub Joel Porter was a big part in the Socceroos comeback bringing relief to his countryman and especially coach Frank Farina who admitted afterwards they had "got out of jail". But for much of the match, Tahiti had looked to have had the measure of the Socceroos employing appropriate tactics to stem the Socceroos attacking options; at the same time being able to execute several counter-attacking moves. Tahiti's Teva Zaveroni latched on to a superb pass from a throw-in. His shot seemed tainted with a tinge of luck taking an unorthodox route to the goal, which left the Socceroos stunned, especially goalkeeper Jason Petkovic. This sent the Tahitian bench into raptures and suddenly brought the small crowd to life. From there on in, the crowd seemed to urge on the Tahitians to victory; even the New Zealand All Whites finding it hard to take their eyes of the game as they awaited their own semi-final that was to follow.

As the minutes ticked by, the frustrated Socceroos conceded two late yellow cards to Tom Pondeljak and Angelo Costanzo. The Tahitians ate up every desperate attempt for the equalizer.

As the rain fell in the second half, nobody would have thought it was to play a part in the final act. With defeat imminent, New Zealand referee Derek Rugg awarded the Socceroos a free kick just outside the box slightly to the left side. The shot found Samin's trusty hands, which for that fatal moment failed to latch on to the ball this time - no doubt the rain contributing to this. The crowd gasped when the ball spilled out of his hands which Durakovic immediately capitalized on like a kid in a candy store.

With the match drawn level, the life seemed to dwieb from the Tahitian cause. Not long after the whistle signaled extra-time. In the sixth minute of extra-time, Damian Mori scored the inevitable golden goal just seconds after his first attempt was saved by Samin. A distraught Tahitian coach Jacquemet rued the missed opportunity to create history, but hailed his players for their gutsy performance. Farina admitted his players could not have played any worse and the wake-up call would provide motivation to their final against New Zealand All Whites where it appears they may be the underdogs.

Oceanian Nations Cup, Final													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
14th. July 2002,			Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand (Mt.Smart Stadium)								3000		
New Zealand..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, New Zealand..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Jason Batty				58	1	GK	Jason Petkovic				
2	DF	Duncan Oughton					2	DF	Fausto de Amicis		69		82
4	DF	Christopher "Chris" Zoricich		63			3	DF	Jade North				82*
14	DF	Ryan Nelsen (c)	78				4	DF	Mehmet Duraković				
20	DF	Gerard Davies					5	DF	Steven "Steve" Horvat (c)				
10	MF	Chris Jackson		40			6	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
12	MF	Simon Elliott					14	DF	Angelo Costanzo				
15	MF	Ivan Vicelich		19			17	DF	Ante Juric				
7	MF	Mark Burton					11	MF	Scott Chipperfield		37		
11	FW	Christopher "Chris" Killen					8	FW	Joel Porter				73
8	FW	Aaron Lines		81			9	FW	Damian Mori				
SUBSTITUTES													
19	GK	James Bannatyne				58	7	MF	Robert "Robbie" Middleby				82
18	DF	Scott Smith					12	MF	Tomislav "Tom" Pondeľjak				82*
5	DF	Jonathon Perry					10	FW	Slobodan "Bobby" Despotovski				73
17	MF	Jeffrey "Jeff" Campbell											
9	FW	Paul Urlovic											
13	DF	Christian Bouckennooghe											
16	MF	Glen Collins											
6	MF	Raffaele "Raf" de Gregorio											
3	DF	Lee Jones											
Team Coach		Mick Waitt					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Charles Ariotima (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 1		Michel Angot (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 2		Gray Vuke (Vanuatu)											

match report from Peter Rees

The All Whites booked themselves a place in next year's Confederations Cup Finals, but more importantly they pushed the game's profile up in New Zealand up another notch following on from the huge interest generated during the 2002 FIFA World Cup last month in Korea/Japan.

Ryan Nelsen's 78 minute goal from a wonderfully taken free kick by Simon Elliott won the match for the All Whites. Australia's Socceroos had dominated the first half with midfielder Scott Chipperfield in superb attacking form. Possibly one of the game's defining points was Jason Batty's brilliant save after the Socceroos had broken through. Joel Porter's shot from almost point blank range could have given the Socceroos the decisive lead but instead the All Whites grew another leg in confidence.

In the second half, the All Whites slowly absorbed the sustained Socceroos pressure. And as Socceroos coach Frank Farina had feared, the All Whites proved lethal from the set-pieces. Nelsen's goal moved Farina to make three desperate changes but the late rally failed to produce the equalizer. There was to be no repeat of their semi-final come from behind win against Tahiti. Not even four minutes added stoppage time was enough and with the final whistle, the crowd of close to 4,000 let out a resounding roar of celebration.

Afterwards, the two coaches were a contrast in expressions. Farina's sullen look reflected the significance of the loss to Australia. He alluded to the result being a product of the shoddy buildup the team had experienced which resulted in only one of their overseas based players being available. Waitt could not find the words but the smile said it all. He applauded the character of the players to turn around a mediocre first half and score the decisive goal.

All Whites Midfielder Mark Burton was later named the Epson Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award. Epson NZ General Manager, Mr Greg Skinner, made the presentation before the final press conference.

The OFC Nations Cup was presented to the All Whites by Oceania Football Confederation president, Basil Scarsella.

2003

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
12th. February 2003, 20.00			Boleyn Ground, Upton Park, London, England									34590	
England..1 v. Australia..3													
half time, England..0 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	David James				46	1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
6	DF	Sulzeer "Sol" Campbell				46*	6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	16			70
5	DF	Rio Ferdinand				46**	11	DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis		31		
2	DF	Gary Neville				46***	3	DF	Craig Moore				
7	MF	David Beckham				46****	15	DF	Lucas Neill				
3	MF	Ashley Cole				46*****	16	MF	Scott Chipperfield				76
11	MF	Kieron Dyer				46^	4	MF	Paul Okon				87
4	MF	Frank James Lampard				46^^	8	MF	Josip Skoko				46
8	MF	Paul Scholes				46^^^	7	MF	Brett Emerton	84			
9	FW	James Scott Beattie				46^****	10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell	42			55
10	FW	Michael Owen				46^*****	9	FW	Mark Viduka				85
SUBSTITUTES													
13	GK	Paul Robinson				46	5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				70
15	DF	Wesley "Wes" Brown				46*	17	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				76
12	DF	Daniel "Danny" Mills				46**	2	DF	Kevin Muscat				87
16	DF	Ledley King				46***	13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				46
17	MF	Owen Hargreaves				46****	12	FW	John Aloisi				55
18	MF	Daniel "Danny" Ben Murphy				46*****	14	FW	Mile Sterjovski				85
19	MF	Jermaine Jenas				46^							
14	DF	Paul Koncheski				46^^							
21	FW	Francis Jeffers	69			46^***							
20	FW	Darius Vassell				46^****							
23	FW	Wayne Rooney				46^*****							
Team Coach		Sven Goran Eriksson					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Manuel Enrique Mejuto Gonzales (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Oscar David Martinez (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 2		Carmelo Miramon Moreno (Spain)											

match report from Thomas Esamie

A dozen years since the last encounter and the first time on English soil Australia got it's chance to thrash the Poms at yet another sport. However, it was suggested it would be a cricket score to England, but then if form is anything to go by an English cricket score would be quite beatable on a football pitch. Also the irony of Wembley being dismantled by an Australian company causing this match to be played elsewhere is amusing too.

The start of the match was delayed about 15 minutes due to a security scare at nearby Kings Cross station, and when the English team came onto the field they were in their away colours of red and white.

Australia had two early chances, one a Kewell cross almost met by Scott Chipperfield but going over the bar thanks to Neville and soon after Kewell took a long range effort from over 20 metres out which had a late swerve on it giving David James a bit of work having to dive to push the ball wide.

True enough England too enjoyed some good passages of play but deep down you knew they were capable of better. Despite all the talk of Australia being respected you couldn't help but feel the England players felt that they could take the match without having to upset their club managers by extending themselves with an upcoming FA Cup match between Arsenal and Manchester United.

From a free kick from out wide by Lazaridis, the ball floated across the goalface to the far post where Tony Popovic rose highest to head the ball back across, and tellingly into, the net. It was then that it became clear just how many Australians were in the stadium - quite a few it seems.

A long Beckham cross to Dyer to create a break ended up in a goalmouth scramble at the feet of Paul Scholes who slammed the ball into the net only to find the Linesman casting doubt on his positioning (actually on replays it looked like a free kick for a push on Tony Popovic). It may have taken 20 minutes for England to realise that there was a game to be played.

Soon afterwards Schwarzer tried to outdribble Michael Owen after a backpass which resulted in the side netting being ripped.

It was a common feature of play. Australia would scramble the ball forward with varying degrees of success and England would do it somewhat better but also lost the ball or shot wide. It was sensed that while England might be a better candidate for the next goal, it wouldn't be too surprising if they didn't get one at all.

Australia were getting their share of corners, one came from some good work from Kewell to win the ball, wide to Chipperfield and the cross found Viduka who tried to head a lob over David James who tipped it over the bar. Another time a series of one-two passes gave Viduka a chance to return the favour and Chipperfield had his slide to the ball interrupted by Neville. England too had good chances to Scholes and Owen, tellingly those came not from crosses but from direct attempts from in front.

Stan Lazaridis was booked for a foul on Beckham.

There was the usual to and fro for a while and then very suddenly Kewell was through on goal. Lampard had the ball taken off him and immediately the ball was sent towards the English end. Ferdinand and Kewell jostled for the ball but Kewell won out and Ferdinand was watching from his seat on the penalty box. Kewell jinked back to get past David James and sidefooted the ball into the net with his right foot. Australia 2-0. At halftime England manager Eriksson made good on his promise to put a new set of players on the pitch with 11 substitutions. Australia made one. The problem here was that the English side had to play themselves in again. That said they started with a bang both Vassell and Rooney causing some problems.

Just to liven up proceedings a streaker entertained the crowd not long after Kewell was substituted out for Aloisi.

Of the English in the second half most of the good work was done by Hargreaves with some decent contributions but the whole deal seemed very disjointed and what flow the English enjoyed in the first half seemed gone. However, it was a well aimed cross from Jermaine Jenas towards the near post which was met by Jeffers and glanced beyond the outstretched hand of Schwarzer, that gave a well worked goal.

Australia started to wind down a bit and made a few substitutions.

Aloisi got the ball and had King in close attendance. Unable to shake his marker Aloisi threaded the ball through to Emerton coming down the middle and with the keeper to beat Emerton put the ball through Robinsons legs into the net.

That pretty much was the end of the game, the last actual kick by Emerton taking a free kick at goal comfortably saved by Robinson.

The merits of this win can be debated but it enters the record books as a 3-1 result to Australia and it's all Australia could have done. Beat the team which turned up on the day. At best England can claim a draw for their second half team.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
19th. August 2003,			Lansdowne Road, Dublin, Republic of Ireland									37200	
Republic of Ireland..2 v. Australia..1													
half time, Republic of Ireland..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Nick Colgan					GK	Mark Schwarzer					
	DF	Stephen Carr				58	DF	Lucas Neill					
	DF	Gary Breen				46	DF	Hayden Foxe					
	DF	Kenneth "Kenny" Cunningham				84	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					
	DF	Stephen "Steve" Finnan				67	DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					
	MF	John O'Shea	74				DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto					69
	MF	Mark Kinsella					MF	Brett Emerton					
	MF	Matthew "Matt" Holland				19	MF	Paul Okon					67
	FW	Damien Duff				79	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					
	FW	Robert "Robbie" Keane				44	MF	Scott Chipperfield					
	FW	Gary Doherty				58*	FW	Mark Viduka	49				
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Ian Harte				58	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					67
	DF	Andrew "Andy" O'Brien				46	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					69
	DF	Richard "Richie" Dunne				84	FW	John Aloisi					
	DF	Kevin Kilbane				67	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					
	MF	Colin Healy				19	GK	Zeljko Kalac					
	FW	Niall Quinn				79	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell					
	FW	David Connolly				44	DF	Craig Moore					
	FW	Clinton Morrison	81			58*	DF	Kevin Muscat					
							MF	Josip Skoko					
Team Coach		Brian Kerr					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Karel Vidlak (Czech Republic)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from the FAI

Two late goals from John O'Shea and Clinton Morrison stretched Ireland's unbeaten record under Brian Kerr to seven games with a narrow 2-1 victory over Australia before 37,200 happy fans at Lansdowne Road on Tuesday night.

That set up the perfect platform for the vital European Championship qualifying games against Russia and Switzerland in September in October. The Socceroos looked on course to repeat their shock 3-1 victory over England at Upton Park in February when Marc Viduka gave them a shock lead on 49 minutes.

But Ireland had other ideas with O'Shea on target with a glancing header on 74 minutes for his first goal for his country and then substitute Morrison grabbing the winner six minutes later.

Australia had a major set-back just hours before kick-off time when new Liverpool signing Harry Kewell was forced to withdraw because of an Achilles tendon problem. The gifted striker flew back to Anfield an hour before kick-off time for treatment in the hope that he would be available for Sunday's Premiership game away to Aston Villa.

Ireland had two early let-offs when Parma midfielder Marco Bresciano unleashed a tremendous 22 yard effort on 13 minutes, which struck the crossbar with keeper Nicky Colgan beaten. From the resulting rebound Basel's Scott Chipperfield headed over the bar. And a minute later Manchester City's Danny Tiatto had an effort blocked by Colgan after Bresciano had opened up the Irish defence. The keeper was able to collect the ball when a fortunate rebound from Breen was straight into his hands.

The first real moment of danger to the Australian goal came on 20 minutes when a free kick by Steve Finnan on the left after a foul on Damien Duff was headed just over by striker Gary Doherty.

But it was Australia who really should have broken the deadlock when a long clearance by Middlebrough keeper Mark Schwarzer completely outwitted the Irish defence allowing Bresciano a clear-cut opening. But with only Colgan to beat, the Parma shot wide of the target.

Despite the hustle and bustle of Robbie Keane and Doherty up front and some good runs down the right by Stephen Carr, Ireland failed to get to grips in midfield with new Sunderland signing Colin Healy taking over from injured Charlton man Matt Holland midway through the first half after he suffered an ankle ligament injury.

Then three minutes before the interval Birmingham's Stan Lazaridis brought the best out of Colgan with a stinging shot from 20 yards grabbed by the 'keeper after the industrious Brett Emerton had created the opening.

Seconds before the interval Keane was denied an almost certain goal when Schwarzer somehow blocked his close range effort after good approach work between Carr and Mark Kinsella. Fortunately for Australia, Portsmouth's Hayden Foxe was back to complete the clearance.

Sadly Keane was injured in that scoring attempt when he seemed to go over on his ankle and had to be stretchered off the pitch to a sympathetic ovation from the Lansdowne Road crowd. West Ham's David Connolly was then introduced as a substitute.

Newcastle United's Andy O'Brien was introduced as a third Irish substitute at half-time when winning his seventh cap as a replacement for Breen. And it wasn't the happiest of starts for the central defender when he failed to cut out a cross from the left by Lazaridis on 49 minutes.

Leeds United striker Viduka had room to chest the ball down and rifle a shot into the roof of the net from close range to spark off celebrations among the sizeable contingent of Aussie fans.

Manchester United's O'Shea had one header over the bar after a Steve Finnan free. Then Duff had a tremendous effort from the edge of the box pushed round the post by Schwarzer after good approach work between Finnan and Connolly.

Manager Kerr then introduced further substitutes during the second half - Morrison, Ian Harte and Kevin Kilbane in a bid for an equaliser. And it was Morrison, with his first touch of the ball, who went closest when shooting just wide after Connolly had provided the opening.

But Australia were growing in confidence and only the alertness of Colgan prevented Viduka and Bresciano from stretching their lead with the 'keeper down to block both efforts in quick succession.

Then came O'Shea's moment of glory after Duff had been fouled by Emerton on the right on 74 mins. Harte's perfect free kick was headed home at the near post by the Manchester United man giving Schwarzer no chance. And the huge home support had more to celebrate six minutes later when Morrison grabbed a second Irish goal.

A clever ball over the top by Harte found the Birmingham City striker in the clear and he somehow managed to roll the ball past Schwarzer despite the despairing efforts of Tony Popovic to prevent the ball entering the net.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. September 2003,			Madejski Stadium, Reading, England									8050	
Jamaica..1 v. Australia..2													
half time, Jamaica..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Donovan Ricketts						GK	Mark Schwarzer				46
	DF	Craig Ziadie						DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
	DF	Frank Sinclair						DF	Lucas Neill				
	DF	Tyrone Marshall				78		DF	Stephen "Steve" Laybutt		X		
	DF	Michael Johnson						DF	Kevin Muscat				
	MF	Kevin Lisbie	21			78*		MF	Josip Skoko				
	MF	Ricardo Gardner		73				MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	19			
	FW	Omar Daley						MF	Paul Okon				
	FW	Trevor Benjamin				59		MF	Scott Chipperfield				
	FW	Barry Hayles				70		FW	Mark Viduka				85
	FW	Ricardo Fuller				46		FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell	58			
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	Onandi "Nandi" Lowe				78		GK	Zeljko Kalac				46
	FW	Jamal Campbell-Ryce				78*		FW	Mile Sterjovski				85
	DF	Damion Stewart				59							
	FW	Fabian Taylor				70							
	FW	Jermaine Johnson				46							
Team Coach		Carl Brown					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Andrew D'Urso (England)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Thomas Esamie

The turn out was poor but the match began in what is commonly referred to as enterprising fashion. Both sides seemed keen to go for goal and while the initial minutes favoured the Jamaican run of play as the play settled down Australia found some rhythm of their own and strung together good periods of possession and even managed some shots at goal.

It was easy to see that either side could score at any moment and so after 20 or so minutes we had a score of 1-1.

Kewell found himself with some space from deflection in a bit of a clearance scramble in the Jamaican penalty area and blasted a shot at goal from in front and outside the box which was deflected away (off the shoulder of the man marking Viduka) to Bresciano who volleyed the ball towards the far post. The keeper did well to reposition himself so quickly and even got a piece of the ball as he dived for the save, but the ball bounded into the net via the far post for the opening goal of the game.

Minutes, nay seconds later Ricardo Fuller took a big run into the Australian half and took the ball to the goalline. He took a shot which Schwarzer fended off but only into the path of Lisbee who hooked it past some defenders hurrying back and into the net to restore the balance in the scoreline.

Soon after the yellow card was produced, to Laybutt, so the game had started in earnest.

It was noted that before the goals Bresciano took a free kick for a shot at goal. After he had scored during open play and, when the next opportunity for a free kick came along, Kewell and Viduka combined. The result was a corner so they did better than Marco, whose shot ballooned over the bar, but it would be nice to see a designated free kicker... as long as he was any good.

The half progressed and the level of enterprise remained at an unabated high and pleasingly Australia created a number of chances and plausible ones too. Jamaica too had more than one opportunity to score, but the official shot count was 10-4 going in to halftime.

The only thing which changed at halftime was some of the players, the match progressed in pretty much the same fashion before it paused. Some more desperate defending from Australia, some more shots at goal at the other end. Whoever was going to win it would have had to do something to deserve it.

It turned out that on the hour a good incursion from Jamaica was eventually defused and the ball found its way to the feet of Okon, who in turn sent it over halfway in the direction of Harry Kewell in full flight, three defenders running in his wake. The goal keeper advanced and Harry left footed Australia into the lead. It was elegant, clean and done with such confidence that it was hard to believe the same side was responsible for a string of misses.

Jamaica did manage to even up the score in the 73rd minute, but it was only the score of yellow cards when Ricardo Gardener caught Lucas Neill on the ankle.

It really started becoming the Kewell and Viduka show with notable contributions from all over the park towards the end of the game. What Jamaica added in terms of fresh legs in the second half they also lost in cohesion, in stark contrast with Ireland where their use of substitutes seemed to enhance their resolve and ability, with great effect. Farina on the other hand made very little use of substitutes, in any of the three games so far this year and that seems to have some benefits.

At the end the shot count was in the vicinity of 21-6 and while not all of the shots were on target there were enough to make me seriously consider Donovan Ricketts as man of the match, in the end I'd pick Harry though. Good match, great result.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
16th. November 2003, 15.00			Arena Joondalup, Joondalup, Western Australia				Humid					2800	
Australian XI.0 v. Iraq..1													
half time, Australian XI.0 v. Iraq..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Neil Young						GK	Uday Talib Jawad				
		Leon Russell						DF	Haidar Obaid Jassim				
		Dale McCulloch				X		MF	Qusai Hashim Saleh				X
		Keith Brown						DF	Emad Aoda Mahoder				
		Jamie Kuzmanovich				X*			Rafid Badraddin Ahmad				
		Adrian Sutton (c)						MF	Mohanad Mohammed Ali (c)				
		Andrew Mason				X**			Haithem Kadhim Tahir				X*
		Aaron Cole						MF	Saeed Muhsin Ali Al-Tameemi				
		Todd Howarth						MF	Jassim Swadi Fayadh				
		Nick Ward				X***		FW	Ahmed Mnajid Abbas				X**
		Robbie Slater						FW	Abbas Hassan Hassoun	89			
SUBSTITUTES													
		Shaun Kilkelly				X		DF	Haidar Abdul-Razzaq Hassan				X
		Craig Surtees				X*		MF	Qusai Munir Aboudi Al-Husseini				X*
		Daniel Trim				X**			Nassir Talaa Dehilan				X**
		Adam Bunce				X***							
Team Coach		Paul Simmons					Team Coach		Bernd Strange				
Team Manager		Peter Kouliouzos					Team Manager		Abdulah Sudad				
Referee		Eddie Lennie											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													
Squad List			Adam Casey		AIS		Squad List			Saad Nassir Jammel			
			Stuart Musialik		AIS					Uday Talib Jawad			
			Nick Ward		AIS					Bassim Abbas Kati Al-Ogaili			
			Billy Celeski		AIS					Haidar Jabar Khadim			
			Robbie Slater							Younis Mahmoud Khalaf			
			Neil Young		Sorrento					Haidar Obaid Jassim			
			Cory Hugo		Swan IC					Mohanad Mohammed Ali			
			Alan Dunlop		Bassendean					Haithem Kadhim Tahir			
			Craig Surtees		Fremantle City					Nassir Talaa Dehilan			
			Jamie Kuzmanovich		Inglewood United					Saeed Muhsin Ali			
			Shaun Kilkelly		Inglewood United					Qusai Hashim Saleh			
			Aaron Cole		Perth SC					Jassim Swadi Fayadh			
			Adrian Sutton		Floreat Athena					Haidar Abdul-Razzaq Hassan			
			Leon Russell		Western Knights					Rafid Badraddin Ahmad			
			Jeff Bright		Cockburn City					Salih Sadir Salih Al-Sadoun			
			Darren Broxton		ECU Joondalup					Abbas Hassan Hassoun			
			Dale McCulloch		Sorrento					Emad Aoda Mahoder			
			Keith Brown		The City					Ahmed Mnajid Abbas			
			Adam Bunce		Perth SC					Qusai Munir Aboudi			
			Todd Howarth		Perth SC					Nashat Akram Ali			
			Scott Bulloch		ECU Joondalup								
			Glen Thomas		Sorrento								
			Daniel Trim		Western Knights								
			Simon Harland		Sorrento								
			Shane Crampton		Perth SC								
			Andrew Mason		Sorrento								
			Anthony Jones		Floreat Athena								
			Andreas Oliveira		Floreat Athena								
			Kevin Coreira		Fremantle City								
			John Higgins		ECU Joondalup								

Saad Nassir Jammel is also shown as Saad Nassir Jamil, Bassim Abbas Kati Al-Ogaili as Bassim Abbas Gatea Al-Ogaili, Haidar Jabar Khadim as Haidar Abdul-Jabar Kadhim, Ahmed Mnajid Abbas as Ahmad Mnajed Abbas, and Nassir Talaa Dehilan as Nasser Talaa Duhalan.

This match was billed as a World Peace Game between an Australian Representative team and Iraq. The Australian Representative team was made up of four scholarship holders from the Institute of Sport's soccer programme, WA State Team members and a special guest appearance by former Socceroo Robbie Slater. As the bulk of the starting line-up were from the Western Australia State team some sources refer to the team as Western Australia. Furthermore, a second match was played on 22nd November 2003 at Collingwood Park, Albany by a wholly WA side before an attendance of 1,500. The result was Western Australia..0 v. Iraq..4 ; Goal scorers:- Jassim Swadi Fayadh, Mohanad Mohammed Ali, Ahmed Mnajid Abbas, and Nassir Talaa Dehilan (penalty).

2004

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
18th. February 2004,			Estadio Olimpico, Caracas, Venezuela									12000	
Venezuela..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Venezuela..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Gilberto Angelucci Guión				46	1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Luis José Vallenilla Pacheco				61	2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
3	DF	José Manuel Rey Cortegoso			72		3	DF	Craig Moore				
6	DF	Alejandro Enrique Cichero Konarek					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
27	DF	Jonay Miquel Hernández Santos					7	DF	Lucas Neill				
8	MF	Luis Enrique Vera Martineau				46*	10	DF	Simon Colosimo				
14	MF	Leopoldo Rafael Jiménez					8	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
10	MF	Gabriel José Urdaneta Rangel				46**	14	FW	Mile Sterjovski				90+2
18	MF	Juan Fernando Arango Sáenz	90+2				11	FW	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				28
9	FW	Massimo Margiotta					9	FW	David Zdrilic				83
16	FW	Dickson Ruberth Morán Puelo				46***	12	FW	Paul Agostino	18			62
SUBSTITUTES													
22	GK	Rafael Edgar Dudamel Ochoa				46		DF	Stephen Laybutt				90+2
20	MF	Héctor Augusto González Guzmán				61	15	FW	Ahmad Elrich				28
19	DF	Andréé Anibal "Varilla" González Frustacci				46*		MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				83
17	FW	Jorge Alberto Rojas Méndez				46**	5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				62
15	FW	Alejandro Enrique Moreno Riera				46***							
Team Coach		Richard Paez					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Oscar Julian Ruiz (Colombia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Rafael Yanez (Venezuela)											
Assistant Referee 2		Plácido Chuello (Venezuela)											

Some reports have Vince Grella substituting for David Zdrilic but SoccerAustralia says Nick Carle. Also, Grella was injured.

match report from ABC

A superb goal in the second minute of injury time has given 10-man Venezuela a 1-1 draw with the Socceroos in their friendly international at the Olympic Stadium in Caracas.

The result flattered the home side despite a lift in intensity by the Venezuelans in the second half.

Australia opened the scoring in the 18th minute after a deflected shot by Marco Bresciano won the Socceroos a corner.

The Socceroos' research had indicated that the South Americans had a weakness against quality crosses and so it proved.

Stan Lazaridis took the corner wide on the Australian right. It was met at the far post by David Zdrilic, who headed it towards the far post of the goal.

Venezuela's keeper pushed the ball onto the post before it rebounded to Agostino, who poked it home from close range.

Shortly afterwards the Socceroos were dealt a blow when left winger Lazaridis, who plays his club football with Birmingham City in the English Premier League, injured his right knee and was forced off the field.

That forced a reshuffle as Parramatta Power's Ahmed Elrich came on for his first full cap, moving to the right wing.

The youngster, part of Australia's Olympic team, made an immediate impression with a number of good crosses.

After half-time the Venezuelans came out with added urgency, pressuring the Australians on the ball and cutting down the Socceroos' options in defence and midfield.

Where Australia was able to play a possession game moving out of their defensive third in the first 45 minutes, this was not the case in the opening part of the second half.

Despite Venezuela's dominance after the break, it was the Australians who created the first clear-cut chance of the second half.

The home side was reduced to 10 men in the 78th minute when captain Jose Rey was sent off for a second bookable offence.

Shortly after Rey's dismissal, Australia won a corner and Zdrilic missed a free header at the far post, the ball sliding off his head for a goal kick.

Minutes later Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer made a good save after Venezuela worked a good move from a free kick 20 metres out.

Defensively, new Socceroos captain Craig Moore led from the front.

Mile Sterjovski, Marco Bresciano and Simon Colosimo all played well in the midfield while David Zdrilic worked hard, his only blemish coming midway through the second half when he missed a gilt-edged scoring opportunity.

The final goal came after three defensive errors by the Socceroos in succession - close to the only three errors made by the otherwise superb defence.

Firstly they gave away possession deep in his own half, giving Venezuela a throw-in.

Then a Socceroos defender was turned by winger Hector Gonzalez. His cross found Venezuela's most damaging player Juan Arango, who had drifted wide to lose his marker Kevin Muscat.

From a difficult angle the Venezuelan volleyed an equaliser with what was almost the last kick of the match.

The match itself has been overshadowed in the build-up by the continuing controversy surrounding the no-show of high-profile players including Mark Viduka, Harry Kewell, Josip Skoko and John Aloisi.

More is expected on that issue in coming days, but of more immediate concern to Frank Farina was the resulting changes necessary to the side.

While the back four of Kevin Muscat, Craig Moore, Tony Popovic and Lucas Neill was settled, Farina was forced to reshuffle his midfield and introduce a new attack force of Zdrilic and Agostino.

The match is seen as vital in Australia's build-up for the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

Should Australia top the Oceania qualifying group, they will have to win a play-off against a South American team to progress to the finals.

Socceroos: Mark Schwarzer; Kevin Muscat, Craig Moore (c), Tony Popovic, Lucas Neill; Mile Sterjovski, Marco Bresciano, Simon Colosimo, Stan Lazaridis; David Zdrilic, Paul Agostino.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
30th. March 2004,			Loftus Road Stadium, London, England									16108	
Republic of South Africa..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Republic of South Africa..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Hans Vonk						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
	DF	Thabang Molefe						DF	Lucas Neill				
	DF	Bradley Carnell				33		DF	Craig Moore (c)				
	DF	Aaron Mokoena						DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	MF	Mbulelo Mabizela						MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	MF	Thabo Bennett Mnguni				59		MF	Josip Skoko				
	MF	Stephen Pienaar				74		MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	19			75
	FW	Siyabonga Nomvethe						MF	Scott Chipperfield				
	FW	Sibusiso Zuma						MF	Brett Emerton				75*
	FW	Delron Buckley						MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				64
	FW	Shaun Bartlett						FW	Mark Viduka				64*
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Mogammat Nasief Morris				33		MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				75
	MF	Lance Davids				59		FW	Mile Sterjovski				75*
	MF	Benedict Vilakazi				74		FW	David Zdrilic				64
								FW	John Aloisi				64*
Team Coach		Styles Phumo					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mark Halsey (England)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Peter Konsto

It was by no means the greatest performance by the Socceroos, but neither was it a bad one.

Expectations are high after the England win last year, and while most were predicting a big win for Australia, this was always going to be a tricky game for the Socceroos and overall they came through it very well with a hard-fought, yet well executed victory.

A first half goal from the very impressive midfielder Marco Bresciano was what it took for the Socceroos to defeat South Africa, who could possibly feel aggrieved they didn't get something from the game.

"This was not one of our better games, but I'm reasonably satisfied with that performance," Farina said after the match. "You sometimes have to graft out results and with the talent and class we've got, I know we can do better."

Farina indeed signalled his intentions by fielding perhaps his strongest line-up with quite a few notables staying on the bench, leaving in no doubt the strength and depth of this Australian team when all players are fit and available.

There were many pleasing facets to come from this Socceroo display, with Farina agreeing that the defensive effort was one of the most positive aspects of the performance.

"We were defensively very solid," he said. "They caught us a lot on the counter-attack, especially in the second half, but all the defenders handled the situations that arose throughout the match very well."

Indeed, the central defensive pairing of Craig Moore and Tony Popovic worked very well together, providing a defensive platform that was solid, cohesive and confident at all times.

Blackburn fullback Lucas Neill was equally adept at both going forward to link up in attacks as well as fulfilling his defensive duties. In a less familiar role (to what he plays at Birmingham City), Stan Lazaridis played at left full back and proved a great success here, continuing his usual attacking forays along the wing and covering well when required in defence.

On the performance of Lazaridis, Farina said, "I feel that Stan has had his better games for Australia playing in that deeper role and he did exceptionally well for us there tonight."

South Africa did look dangerous on their quick counter-attacking moves, but the Socceroos were always able to nullify these as players dropped back with speed and covered where and when necessary.

Although South Africa were kept to only a few good goal scoring opportunities, goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer rose to every occasion when called upon. Indeed, he prevented South Africa from equalising with a brilliant save low to his right from a shot by Mbulelo Mabizela ten minutes into the second half. He commanded his area with confidence and aplomb; and will certainly be difficult to dislodge as Australia's first choice in this position.

The centre midfield duo of Josip Skoko and Marco Bresciano did remarkably well. Skoko was magnificent, winning possession and breaking down South African attacks at every opportunity. He tracked back throughout the match and was a continual thorn in the side of the Bafana Bafana who would constantly find themselves dispossessed by his tenacious tackling.

Bresciano made a greater impact offensively, linking up well with both Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka throughout the game in what is proving a fantastic attacking triumvirate. They seem to have an almost telepathic understanding between them and this bodes extremely well for the future if all three can stay injury free and available for selection.

The goal volleyed home by Bresciano exemplified this understanding as Viduka climbed inside the box to chest and control a throw-in which he then flicked over his head to the oncoming Bresciano who had timed his run to perfection.

Kewell was at his usual best, mesmerising the opposition with his mazy running and deft and incisive passing.

Both Brett Emerton and Scott Chipperfield did a fine job on either side of midfield, and while he found himself adrift and not involved enough in the game at times, Chipperfield does however have a knack of getting into goalscoring positions and was unlucky not to have a goal through his sheer persistence soon after Bresciano had put us in front.

Emerton proved better at not only being able to attract the ball, but in also his ability to use it more effectively.

Farina made four substitutes in the second half, resting Kewell and Viduka for David Zdrilic and John Aloisi respectively after 65 minutes, and then replacing Bresciano for debutant Tim Cahill; and Emerton for Mile Sterjovski with fifteen minutes remaining.

On the substitutes, Farina said that he was very happy with them and how they performed, but that as a rule, he generally does not like to make so many changes, saying "At this stage of the season, a lot of the boys are tired so you are tempted to make quite a few substitutions in these types of matches. But equally, you need to be able to see how players react and perform when they are fatigued."

Millwall's Tim Cahill was especially pleased saying, "I received my first cap in a little presentation in the dressing room and there are no words to describe how I feel. It was very emotional."

Farina also added that he was very appreciative of the fact that 16,100 fans attended the game, saying that it is a great indicator that London can be a great base for the European Socceroos.

Overall, this performance again shows the great depth and quality that the Socceroos possess. Farina should be pleased that with the games against Turkey and then the all-important qualifiers, that Australia can call upon a wide range of experience and talent. And when adding the elements of team spirit, determination and resolve to the equation, it augurs well for the tough games ahead.

Freedom and Friendship Cup													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
21st. May 2004,			Aussie Stadium, Moore Park, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Football Stadium)									28326	
Australia..1 v. Turkey..3													
half time, Australia..0 v. Turkey..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer (c)				83	1	GK	Rüştü Reçber				
3	DF	Stephen Laybutt					2	DF	Tolga Seyhan				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					3	DF	Bülent Korkmaz (c)				
10	DF	Simon Colosimo					13	DF	Deniz Barış				85
7	MF	Brett Emerton					6	MF	Ümit Özat	42			
8	MF	Josip Skoko				67	7	MF	Okan Buruk				85*
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					14	MF	Serkan Balcı				58
14	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					5	MF	Emre Belözoğlu				90
16	MF	Scott Chipperfield				46	11	FW	Hasan Şaş				
13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	47(pk)				18	FW	Tuncay Şanlı				58*
21	FW	David Zdrilic				67*	9	FW	Hakan Şükür	69, 75			
SUBSTITUTES													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				83	19	DF	İbrahim Üzülmaz				85
17	DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				67, 79		MF	Ali Tandoğan				85*
2	FW	Ahmad Elrich				79	25	MF	Ali Güneş				58
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				46	21	MF	Murat Hacıoğlu				90
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski				67*	24	FW	Niyazi Serhat Akın				58*
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Kazım Ersun Yanal				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Toru Kamikawa (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Soccer Australia

The Qantas Socceroos have been defeated 3-1 by a slick and skilful Turkish side in a passionately fought encounter at Aussie Stadium tonight.

The pedigree that brought World Cup success to the Turks was evident throughout the match, with a brace to national hero Hakan Sukur and a well-taken free kick to Umit Ozan canceling out Marco Bresciano's second half penalty.

The match was certainly not void of feeling; with Japanese referee Toru Kamikawa handing out as many as eight yellow cards over the ninety minutes.

Despite the defeat, the Qantas Socceroos gave a fair account of themselves in front of a healthy crowd of 28,326.

Frank Farina will look kindly upon bright performances from Simon Colosimo in his less preferred role at right back and debutant Max Vieri, who added spark to the Qantas Socceroo front line after coming on for Scott Chipperfield at half time.

However Farina lamented the goals scored by Turkey, with all coming from mistakes by the Australians.

"I thought in the first half we probably didn't come to grips with it too well, but in stating that I think the best chances that fell to them were through silly errors from us," Farina said after the match.

"The first goal was a bit soft, Schwarz (Mark Schwarzer) most probably won't make a mistake like that again for a while, as it's gone underneath him. I thought we were on top of it in the second half, Bresc (Mark Bresciano) got the penalty and then again a stupid error, a silly mistake and at this level against quality opposition you can't do it."

The first half was a tensely fought affair, eventually won by Turks in the closing stages.

Aside from a few chances, the Qantas Socceroos were completely dominated by the visitors in the first stanza, with Hasan Sas and Emre Belozoglu particularly proving difficult for the home side's makeshift defense.

The Turks much deserved halftime lead arrived in the latter stages when Fenerbahce defender Ozan blasted home a free kick from 20 metres.

Ozan's piercing drive burst through the Australian wall and underneath goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, sending the large Turkish contingent on hand into delirium.

The goal was just reward for a sustained half of constant pressure from the Turks, although Schwarzer will be filthy with himself for allowing the ball to creep under his body.

Tuncay Sanli should have put his side in front on eleven minutes, but for a superb save by Schwarzer. The Australian captain was at his sprawling best when parrying Sanli's effort after Vince Grella was dispossessed deep in the Australians half.

For Australia, Parma midfielder Bresciano came closest in the dying seconds when poking Josip Skoko's layoff over the crossbar from close range. But, to the credit of Farina, the Qantas Socceroos looked a changed side after the break and fully deserved their equalizer on 49 minutes. With Vieri joining David Zdrilic in the final third, the Qantas Socceroos had a more attacking feel about their game and this brought instant success. Having worked his way into the Turkish half, Bresciano was brought down by goal scorer Ozan on the edge of the area following some fine touches from Vieri. The Melbourne boy dusted himself off to convert the resultant penalty and level the scores to the delight of the spirited Australian crowd. The Qantas Socceroos continued to press the Turks and looked capable of taking the lead, only to surrender their ascendancy in the 69th minute. A mix up at the back from Stephen Laybutt and Bresciano gifted possession to Sas, who crossed to the near post where Sukur neatly turned the ball past Schwarzer. The Galatasaray front man doubled his tally seven minutes later with the easiest goal he will ever score. He was able to tap the ball home virtually on the goalline after Okan Buruk headed ball towards goal from Sas's cross. Schwarzer in coming out for the cross collected his own teammate Danny Tiatto, who looks to have a double fracture of the jaw. Vieri showed his prowess in the air in the latter stages getting on the end of several Ahmad Elrich crosses, with one effort just going over the bar. Overall Farina was disappointed with the result but was pleased with how the boys responded in the second half before giving away the second goal that killed Australia's momentum.

Freedom and Friendship Cup													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
24th. May 2004,			Telstra Dome, Melbourne, Victoria (Docklands Stadium)								28953		
Australia..0 v. Turkey..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. Turkey..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	Rüştü Reçber				46
3	DF	Stephen Laybutt					3	DF	Bülent Korkmaz (c)				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar (c)					17	DF	İbrahim Toraman				75
10	DF	Simon Colosimo				77*	19	DF	İbrahim Üzülmez				46*
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					6	MF	Ümit Özat				65
7	MF	Brett Emerton				77	7	MF	Okan Buruk				46**
13	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				85	14	MF	Serkan Balcı				
8	MF	Josip Skoko					24	FW	Niyazi Serhat Akın				
14	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					18	FW	Tuncay Şanlı				46***
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				63	8	FW	Nihat Kahveci	44			
21	FW	David Zdrilic				63*	9	FW	Hakan Şükür				
SUBSTITUTES													
2	FW	Ahmad Elirich				77	23	GK	Volkan Demirel				46
16	MF	Scott Chipperfield				85	2	DF	Tolga Seyhan				75
23	DF	Jade North				77*	13	DF	Deniz Barış				46*
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski				63	16	MF	Mustafa Koray Avcı				65
9	FW	Ante Milicic				63*	4	DF	Fatih Akyel				46**
							21	MF	Murat Hacıoğlu				46***
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Kazım Ersun Yanal				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Derek Rugg (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Matthew Merc (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Jim Ouliaris (New Zealand)											

match report from Alan Clark

Australia went down by the only goal of the match in a tightly contested game against Turkey at Docklands Stadium in Melbourne on Monday evening - the second match in a two-game friendly series for the inaugural Freedom and Friendship Cup. Nihat Kahveci expertly drove a free-kick high into the Australian net just before the half-time break in a stunning display of power and direction. Speaking through an interpreter, Turkey coach Ersun Yanal was delighted to have won his first trophy in just his third game in charge, "I'd like to thank the Australian Soccer Association as well as the citizens of Australia of Turkish heritage. We're very pleased to (have) this moment with the Turkish community in Australia. It was great to win, but the most important thing was to learn more about our players and what we can do with them. Our team has the ability to win if they are determined to work towards the one goal together. The Cup is a symbol of this."

It is a good start for Yanal, taking over the reins after the disappointment of Turkey's non-qualification for Euro 2004 after Turkey's magical performances which deservedly earned third-place in the 2002 World Cup. Australia coach Frank Farina was also able to draw some positives from the series. "All of us are disappointed with the result, but I felt we played extremely well tonight. We were very solid all over the park (and) created a number of opportunities. If you create that many chances, you've got to be reasonably pleased. You'd like at least one of them to go in, (but) I'd have more concern if we weren't creating chances."

The closeness of the contest illustrates how grievously Australia is mis-ranked in the FIFA schedule. According to FIFA's current list, Turkey is ranked seventh and Australia eighty-two places behind in 89th place. Few would regard FIFA's rankings with much credibility, but this is a travesty. Ranked above Australia are nations recently defeated by the Socceroos, some convincingly on their own turf, in recent years. These include Scotland, South Africa, and - famously - England, with no recent match being played on home soil. There would be few teams outside perhaps the top ten against which Australia could not compete with fair prospects of a victory, and there would be none around Australia's placing which might expect other than a drubbing.

Australia needed to win by two goals or more to win the silverware following its 1-3 loss in the first game in Sydney just three days prior. Despite opening well, and seemingly having the upper hand during the first-half, it was Kahveci's free-kick as the break was imminent which proved the difference. Kahveci had missed the first game because of his late arrival from his Spanish club, Real Sociedad, and it was his combining with Hakan Sukur up front for the Turks which provided the greatest test for the unfamiliar Australian defence.

Sukur was one of only two Turkish players who saw all 180 minutes of match-time - the other being captain Bülent Korkmaz, and the travelling Turkish media sought to know if this was a signal that Yanal was readying himself to cease their international careers of both. "No," said Yanal. "(Sukur and Korkmaz) played (every minute) because they were doing a good job. As a nation we have to treat some of our legends as idols - we have to embrace them. They've achieved everything that they can achieve in Turkish football."

This was a more confident Australia, and - to be fair - one which would not have surprised were it to have won the match such were the number of chances crafted and opportunities available. Marco Bresciano - returning to the city where he had played his domestic football before becoming the nation's most expensive sportsperson following a transfer to Italian SerieA club Parma - was involved in the greatest number of these opportunities, one as early as the seventh minute after Max Vieri gained possession and crossed from the right. Shortly after, Bresciano chased a long through-ball only to be beaten by the bounce as he attempted a volley to catch the ball as it dropped over his shoulder. Bresciano made it three within three minutes just before the quarter-hour in a breathtaking start. Running onto a cleverly-played ball from the clubless David Zdrilic on the left, Bresciano sought to place the ball across Turkish goalkeeper Rustu Recber to bend in at the far-post. Recber did well to reach it and gratefully palmed it away.

But just to show how sharp Turkey is, within seconds it had been played to Sukur who was in a promising position and breaking up the inside-left channel and into the penalty-area. Steve Laybutt was chasing, more in hope than in prospect, but his presence was enough to put even the mighty Sukur off and his shot was muffed. Australia looked to be seeking to spread the play and keep Turkey's formation farther apart than in the first match. From the early moments of the game, Australia played the ball quickly forwards from deep positions. In one such instance, goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac took a quick free-kick outside his penalty-area onto which Zdrilic ran. Zdrilic's cross was battered away at the last for a corner as Vieri lay in wait and ready to convert.

Speaking after the game, stand-in captain Tony Vidmar told of how the new defence had come together during the series. "Friday night was the first time that back-four had played together. (Tonight) we played it more sharply to the midfield and the guys up front," he said. "On Friday night we didn't do that and we made it difficult for the players in front of us."

Midway through the half Sanli Tuncay burst through a square Australia defence onto a carefully-weighted pass. Kalac had to be at his best to save.

The end-to-end nature of the match continued as within a minute Recber was again in scrambled action. Brett Emerton - who was to have a highly physical contest with Ibrahim Uzulmez in an enthralling personal duel until Uzulmez' half-time substitution - sent in a cross from the right to Vieri in a central position. Vieri's header was punched clear by Recber who seemed to prefer to punch throughout his period on the park rather than collect the ball. Josip Skoko was quick on the follow-up with a shot.

Skoko was a key factor in Australia's confident midfield performance, and brought an additional facet to the game knowing as he does the vast majority of the Turkish players from his time with Genclerberligi.

Skoko was quickly onto the scene to ensure there was no ill-will whenever there was a clash, and at the end of the game he was warmly embraced by many in the Turkey side.

There was a good mix of physicality, speed, and technical skills throughout the game. This was no end of season exhibition match. Emerton was probably the one whose body was most on the line, and his presence would have been taken note of by Turkey in both games of the series.

With the mid-point of the first-half only just reached, further Australian pressure led to a series of corners. Stan Lazaridis - playing his fiftieth game for the Socceroos, a surprisingly low number for such a key member of the national squad - was instrumental in its genesis. Lazaridis had cleverly set up Vieri up the left, who in turn slipped a ball inside to space for Bresciano. It took a desperate defensive lunge at the last to knock it away for the first of the corners. The Turkish defence failed to adequately deal with them and Vince Grella found himself marginally too far in front of a cross to convert before the ball was scragged away for another corner.

But once again Turkey showed how dangerous it could be on the break. Sukur had been as deadly in possession as when creating space. It required fine defensive judgement from Vidmar to break up a perilous move from Sukur, but Sukur was quickly back in possession after a cross, only to shoot wide.

Australia's best moment yet arose with seven minutes of the half to play. Vince Grella took a free-kick from 26 metres which crashed off the bar. Recber had been well-beaten by its pace, and although he got the faintest of touches, were it marginally lower, it would not have been sufficient to have turned it over.

As the sparse home support in a stated 29,000 attendance started to believe this could be Australia's match, two incidents within a couple of minutes turned the contest. Simon Colosimo, deputising in the unfamiliar position of right-back as he had in Sydney, made a shocking tackle on Kahveci wide on the right and was probably lucky to have seen just the yellow-card proffered by New Zealand referee Derek Rugg. Although nothing of substance arose directly from that free-kick, in the next passage of play Rugg awarded Turkey another, this one slightly closer and more centrally placed, after Okan Buruk went down following a challenge from Grella. Television replays, not available to the match officials and likely not shown on the stadium's screens, seemed to indicate the only thing that could have caused the Turk to tumble was a blade of grass or a teaspoon-measure of displaced soil striking him on the shin-pad. Despite this, Farina dismissed questions of the legitimacy of the award, "I think it was a foul. (And) it was a foul we didn't have to make." Kahveci took the free-kick himself and blasted it high into the top corner of the net away from Kalac's despairing left glove.

"That's world-class. It was a wonderful free-kick," said Farina. "Zeljko Kalac was beaten by pure power. You never like to concede a goal, but you've got to take your hat off sometimes for a strike like that."

"Some people are born with the ability," said Kahveci through an interpreter after the match. "But you always have to work at (free-kicks), and this is what I'm doing."

The half-time whistle sounded almost immediately after. It was a harsh way for Australia to have ended a half it had dominated.

Turkey made a quadruple-change at the start of the second half. Swapped were Recber in goal for Volkan Demirel, as well as two from Turkey's left defensive ranks. Buruk, who had fetched and carried behind

Kahveci and Sukur, also departed to be replaced by Fatih Akyel.

Australia's first change was not made until just after the hour when strikers Vieri and Zdrilic were replaced by Mile Sterjovski and Ante Milicic.

"Max (Vieri) made an immediate impact on Friday when he came on," said Farina. "Max is very competitive, he looked really sharp tonight. He and David (Zdrilic) got through a lot of work and tired towards the end. He did a fantastic job for us tonight. He showed that he can hold the ball up, and (that) he can make runs into deeper positions and compete with the best."

But two more good chances for Australia had arisen before the double-change. Vieri had a sharp chance which required a blocking save from Demirel, and shortly afterwards, Grella played Bresciano clear through. Bresciano was able to chest the ball down but his left-foot shot on the volley went wastefully wide.

Steve Laybutt - a player whose form has been remarkably improved following his period in Belgium for Royal Excelsior - was nominally a centre-back in the selection, but managed to see a header cleared off the Turkish line by Korkmaz with Demirel totally stranded. Laybutt had linked up for set-pieces and corners earlier in the game, but had never before found himself so ill-attended.

Farina made another double change with ten minutes remaining. Colosimo was belatedly exchanged for Jade North and Emerton replaced by Ahmad Elrich. Colosimo had offended with two subsequent badly-timed challenges following his first-half caution, either of which would have produced a second yellow from a less forgiving referee.

As the game's final minutes were entered, Milicic showed he was not outclassed at this level by slipping a ball inside for Bresciano. Bresciano's shot was deflected wide.

In the last minute, the cruel fate of Australia conceding a second goal was only just escaped. Kahveci took a free-kick playing the ball into the penalty-area. Substitute Seyhan Tolga rose with Vidmar in an aerial challenge. It was Vidmar's head that made the more positive connection, but insufficient to change its goalwards direction. Vidmar, and the Australia fans, were relieved to see the ball crash onto the bar.

"(Restricting the Turks) to one goal and a minimal amount of chances (showed) the defence did really well," said Vidmar after the game. Not only the defence - the midfielders and the attackers, because we made the line from defence to the strikers as small as we could to restrict their play."

"The tactics we employed tonight worked very well for us," said Farina. "We had bodies around the ball all the time when we didn't have possession. And when we could get turn-over we were going to get opportunities to go forward."

OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
29th. May 2004, 20.00			Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide, South Australia								12100		
Australia..1 v. New Zealand..0													
half time, Australia..1 v. New Zealand..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	Mark Paston				
3	DF	Stephen Laybutt				72	3	DF	David "Dave" Mulligan		26		
4	DF	Simon Colosimo				53	4	DF	Steven Old				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					5	DF	Che Bunce				
7	MF	Brett Emerton					6	DF	Tony Lochhead				
8	MF	Josip Skoko					7	MF	Ivan Vicelich				
9	MF	John Aloisi		14			12	MF	Simon Elliott				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					17	MF	Raf de Gregorio				77
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					9	FW	Noah Hickey				50
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	40				11	FW	Leonida "Leo" Bertos				69
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				67	16	FW	Vaughan Coveny				
SUBSTITUTES													
22	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					22	GK	Glen Moss				
2	DF	Jade North				53	2	DF	Duncan Oughton				77
6	MF	Scott Chipperfield					8	MF	Aaran Lines				
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Brown				
12	FW	Alex Brosque					13	FW	Brent Fisher				50
14	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo					14	DF	Ryan Nelsen				
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski				67	15	DF	Michael "Mike" Wilson				
17	FW	David Zdrilic					18	FW	Shane Smeltz				69
20	DF	Adrian Madaschi				72	19	FW	Neil Jones				
21	FW	Ahmad Elrich					20	DF	Andrew "Andy" Boyens				
							21	DF	Rupesh Puna				
							23	GK	Tamati Williams				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Mick Waitt				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Claus Bo Larsen (Denmark)											
Assistant Referee 1		Bill Hansen (Denmark)											
Assistant Referee 2		Dhirendra Kewal (Fiji)											

match report from Lino Fusco

The Socceroos were a few notches above New Zealand. There was a big difference between the standard of the individuals between the two teams. Players like Emerton, Aloisi, Vieri etc were able to glide past their New Zealand opponents all game. The Aussies were so much sharper.

For their part the Kiwi's played very defensively. They defended well with numbers. At corners there were ten to eleven Kiwis in the box and only three Aussies.

Australia had a lot of trouble with the linesman in the first half and this certainly contributed to keeping down the scoreline. Vieri in particular was outpacing his defender. When the ball was kicked he would be clearly onside - he would outpace his defender and then would be flagged for offside - possibly the linesman was thinking that there was no way that Vieri could gain so many yards on his defender in such a short distance. There was around four wrong offside decision when Vieri had beaten the defence and was one on one with the goalkeeper.

In one particularly bad decision Vieri had his back to the goal shielding off a defender and he was flagged for offside - it was simply impossible for him to be offside. I did feel some empathy for the linesman as it was a pretty daunting environment compared to the games he would normally officiate.

Overall the scoreline was flattering for New Zealand. On the day the Socceroos were at least four goals better than the Kiwis in my opinion.

It was an absolute joy to see class players like Aloisi, Vieri, Emerton, Bresciano etc at Hindmarsh Stadium. They are such gifted players. Emerton is just so quick and powerful. Aloisi - well I think he is so good that maybe he should start ahead of Viduka. Vieri is incredibly quick for such a big player - he works very hard and always looked likely to score - what a great pick up for the Socceroos. Bresciano - well he is looking like he will be the best midfielder Australia has ever had - his skills are just sublime and what a brilliant free kick.

Hindmarsh is a brilliant venue to watch soccer - your so close to the action you can lean over the fence and almost touch the players. Kiwi goalkeeper Paton probably would have preferred to have been a lot further away from the crowd. Every time he kicked the ball he must have been wondering where all of the "baaah-baaaah-baaaah" sheep behind the goals had come from.

Every time I see Kalac I am still surprised at his size - he is a man mountain. His warm up routine before the game was something worth watching. His time in Italy has turned him into a complete professional and

I hope some budding young goalkeepers paid some attention to his approach to the game.

It would have been nice to have seen Kewell and Viduka on the park but in all honesty I do not think Australia missed them - nor does Australia desperately need them. Rather it is players like Lucas Neil and Craig Moore that we really need because it is in the backlines that we will be lacking when coming up against South American opposition. I am not saying that Kewell and Viduka are not brilliant players - just that I think we tend to underestimate the quality of others like Aloisi and Vieri (and Agostino?). Emerton down the right flank and Kewell down the left flank with Viduka and either Vieri, Aloisi or Agostino up front is an absolutely world class forward line.

OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
31st. May 2004, 17.30			Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide, South Australia								1200		
Australia..9 v. Tahiti..0													
half time, Australia..3 v. Tahiti..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					19	GK	Daniel Tapeta				
2	DF	Jade North					2	DF	Vetea Angelo Tchen				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					3	DF	Pierre Kugogne				
20	DF	Adrian Madaschi					5	DF	Jean-Yves Li Waut				80
6	MF	Scott Chipperfield	89				7	DF	Samuel Garcia				
8	MF	Josip Skoko	43			45	13	DF	Vincent Simon Lo-Shing	44(og)			61
9	MF	John Aloisi				45*	8	MF	Billy Mataitai				
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	14, 47				12	MF	Farahia Teuiria				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				45**	10	FW	Axel Temataua				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					16	FW	Félix Tagawa				
17	FW	David Zdrilic	85				17	FW	Hiro Labaste				58
SUBSTITUTES													
7	MF	Brett Emerton					20	GK	Xavier Samin				
12	FW	Alex Brosque					1	GK	Stanley Tien Wah				
14	DF	Patrick Kisorbo				45	4	DF	Lotua Kautai				
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski	51, 61, 74			45*	6	DF	Harry Tong Sang				
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri					9	FW	Gabriel Wajoka				
21	FW	Ahmad Elrich				45**	11	DF	Taufa Neuffer				58
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					14	FW	Rino Moretta				
							15	FW	Larry Marmouyet				61
							18	FW	Georges Pitoeff				80
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Gerard Kautai				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Harry Atisson (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tony Meltetamat (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 2		Paul Dunham (New Zealand)											

match report from The Sydney Morning Herald

Second-half substitute Mile Sterjovski scored the first three goals of his international career, including one while lying on his back, as Australia waltzed to a record 9-0 win over Tahiti in their OFC Nations Cup match at Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium tonight.

Tim Cahill also scored the first two goals of his Socceroos career as Australia surpassed its 5-0 win over Tahiti in Sydney in 1997 as its biggest ever victory over the soccer minnow, to take Australia to the outright top of the table in the tournament.

Australia made five changes to the starting XI that beat New Zealand 1-0 in their first game on Saturday night, with Cahill one of those to come into the side, for just his second match for Australia.

He was the first scorer of the night, in the 14th minute, his first goal for Australia coming from a simple header at the left post, after a good cross from the right side from Stan Lazaridis.

With Tahiti content to let the game be played in Australia's attacking half, and make only occasional half-hearted moves forward, it was only a question of how long it took the home side to build a commanding lead.

Josip Skoko scored the goal of the night in the 43rd minute, when he dummied around an opponent, then belted home a curling low left-footer from the top of the penalty box.

An own goal to Tahiti's Vincent Simon in first-half injury time made it 3-0 at half-time and ensured the Socceroos were on the way to handing the visitors a drubbing.

Cahill scored his second from another simple header two minutes into the second half, before Sterjovski scored the first three goals of his career in the space of 23 minutes.

Sterjovski's second goal was a crisp, well-executed volley from a Tony Vidmar cross, but his first and third goals were both somewhat comical.

The first, in the 51st minute, came after he completely miskicked his first attempt from inside the penalty box, but had enough time and space to have another shot, a symbol of how little pressure the Socceroos were under by this stage, and he was successful with the second attempt.

His third goal also took him two attempts, after Tahiti keeper Stanley Tien Wah made a good reflex save from Sterjovski's close range header.

But he received the ball again as he was lying on his back near the goal-line and poked it into the net for his hat-trick, to make the score 7-0.

David Zdrilic joined the goal-scoring party with a simple goal in the 85th minute to make it 8-0, while Scott Chipperfield chipped in with one of his own in the 90th minute.

Despite saying ahead of the game that there was little to be gained from lopsided results, Australian coach Frank Farina said he took some positives out of tonight's match.

"I would look at how the players kept up the intensity and the pressure," Farina said. "You can drop off in games like that, but they worked through to the end, no one was stopping, that's the pleasing thing. If you learn anything you learn that the players can do it."

He said there would be more team changes for Wednesday's match against Fiji, with the plan to use the entire squad over the course of Australia's five matches in the tournament.

But goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, who was named in the squad but has not played because of a hip injury, has withdrawn from the squad.

Earlier today, NZ beat Solomon Islands 3-0, although the scoreline did not truly reflect the match, with Solomon Islands dominating for long periods of play but unable to score. NZ clinched the game with two goals in the last nine minutes. Vanuatu is still to play Fiji in tonight's other match.

OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
2nd. June 2004, 14.00			Marden Sports Complex, Adelaide, South Australia								2200		
Australia..6 v. Fiji..1													
half time, Australia..2 v. Fiji..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					23	GK	Laisenia Tuba				46
2	DF	Jade North					2	DF	Lorima Dau				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					6	DF	Jone Vesikula				
14	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo		84			7	DF	Malakai Kainihewe				83
20	DF	Adrian Madaschi	6, 50				13	DF	Taniela Waga				
6	MF	Scott Chipperfield				45	5	MF	Emosi Baleinuku				
7	MF	Brett Emerton		33		45*	9	MF	Thomas Vulivuli				
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	39, 66, 75	58			11	MF	Luke Vidovi				56
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					15	MF	Salesh Kumar		82		
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski					18	MF	Laisiasa Gataurua	19		58	
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				60	22	FW	Waisake Sabutu				
SUBSTITUTES													
22	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					1	GK	Simione Tamanisau				46
9	MF	John Aloisi					4	MF	Alvin Avinesh				83
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					10	FW	Veresa Toma				
12	FW	Alex Brosque				45	19	MF	Ovini Duguca				
16	DF	David Tarka					21	MF	Pene Erenio				56
17	FW	David Zdrilic				60							
21	FW	Ahmad Elrich	89			45*							
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Tony Buesnel				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Eduardo Iturralde Gonzalez (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tony Meltetamat (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 2		Pedro Medina Hernandez (Spain)											

match report from The Sydney Morning Herald

An all headed hat-trick from midfielder Tim Cahill has given him five goals in three games for Australia and the Socceroos a 6-1 win over Fiji in their OFC Nations Cup match at Adelaide's Marden Sport Complex today.

Young defender Adrian Madaschi scored two goals and Ahmad Elrich one, as the Socceroos remained at the top of the tournament table with three wins from three matches.

It was Cahill's third appearance for Australia, and his second as a starter. He notched two goals in Australia's 9-0 win over Tahiti on Monday night, with all five of his goals for Australia headed.

"I can't use my feet," he joked. He said it was a "dream come true" to play for his country. "This is why I play - Tahiti, Fiji, Brazil, it doesn't matter, I enjoy it and I like playing with the lads, I'm just really enjoying myself," he said.

After playing for English side Millwall in the prestigious FA Cup final in front of an enormous crowd less than a fortnight ago, Cahill said playing for Australia in front of about 500 people, mostly schoolchildren, at a suburban Adelaide ground today matched it.

"I've been waiting so long to play for Australia so it's just as big for me," he said. "As I said there's no bigger honour than to play for your country."

It was also his first hat-trick, despite scoring two goals for Millwall on nine occasions.

Coach Frank Farina said Cahill's ability to chime in with goals added a dimension to the Socceroos. "That's Tim's strength, making good runs into the box, he's a goal-scoring midfielder, as you can all see obviously," Farina said. "He makes great late runs."

Australia found the match surprisingly hard work early against a Fiji side that rested a handful of players and lost another in the warm-up.

Madaschi toe-poked a gift goal over the line in the sixth minute, after Fiji's goalkeeper Laisenia Tuba fumbled what should have been a simple take, but Fiji's Laisiasa Gataurua then shocked Australia by levelling the scores in the 18th minute. He sprinted past Australian defender Patrick Kisnorbo to get on the end of a long ball out of defence, weaved into the penalty box and rolled a shot past keeper Zeljko Kalac, the first goal conceded by Australia in the tournament.

Australia regained the lead in the 39th minute, when Cahill showed typically good poise and timing to get on the end of a Chipperfield free kick.

Fiji's keeper was then stretchered off the ground with a neck injury after tangling with Cahill after the goal was scored.

Up 2-1 at halftime, Madaschi made it 3-1 soon after, and any chance of a Fiji comeback disappeared in the 59th minute when goal-scorer Gataurua was sent off.

Cahill chimed in with two more headed goals in the 65th and 75th minute, while Elrich capped the victory with a long-range effort close to full-time.

OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
4th. June 2004, 20.00			Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide, South Australia								4000		
Australia..3 v. Vanuatu..0													
half time, Australia..1 v. Vanuatu..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	David Chilia				
2	DF	Jade North					4	DF	Lexa Bule Bibi				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					6	DF	Graham Demas				
16	DF	David Tarka					19	DF	Roger Joe				
7	MF	Brett Emerton	81				21	DF	Tom Manses				
8	MF	Josip Skoko					7	MF	Fedy Vava		83		
9	MF	John Aloisi	25, 85				9	MF	Seimata Chilia				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					16	MF	Alphonse Qorig				74
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					11	FW	Moise Poida				43
12	FW	Alex Brosque				64	12	FW	Lorry Thomsen		65		
17	FW	David Zdrilic				64*	17	FW	Jean Victor Maleb		37		61
SUBSTITUTES													
22	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					20	GK	Charly Kalsanei				
6	MF	Scott Chipperfield					3	DF	Manley Tabe				
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					5	DF	Wilkins Simon Lauru				
14	DF	Patrick Kisonorbo					8	MF	Turei Iautu				
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski				64	10	FW	Etienne Mermer				74
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri					13	FW	Richard Iwai				61
20	DF	Adrian Madaschi					14	MF	Pita Maki				43
21	FW	Ahmad Elrich				64*	15	DF	Daniel Koko Alick				
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					18	MF	Gerard Maki Haitong				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Juan Carlos Buzzetti				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Charles Ariotima (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 1		Michel Angot (Tahiti)											
Assistant Referee 2		Paul Denham (New Zealand)											

match report from The Age

Vanuatu showed that its win over New Zealand this week was no fluke, with a spirited loss to Australia in their Oceania World Cup qualifier here last night.

Although the Socceroos laid siege to the Vanuatu goal, the Pacific islanders held Australia to one goal for more than 80 minutes before crumbling in the final 10 to lose 3-0.

A John Aloisi header in the 25th minute gave the Socceroos the lead, but a disciplined performance from Vanuatu restricted Australia until Brett Emerton lashed in a rebound in the 81st minute. Two minutes later, Aloisi made it three.

Vanuatu goalkeeper David Chilia, who has impressed all tournament, had another eye-catching game and produced numerous saves to defy Australia.

While the Socceroos assured themselves of a place in the play-off, which determines which Oceania country takes on the fifth-placed South American nation for a place in the cup finals in Germany in two years, the battle for the second spot has gone down to the wire with an upset still possible.

Unlikely as it may seem, the Solomon Islands could edge New Zealand out of second place and put themselves in line for play-off games against Australia, which would be a bigger humiliation for the Kiwis than their shock loss to Vanuatu earlier this week. The Solomons gave themselves a chance to pull off what would be the biggest upset in Oceania history after their 2-1 win over Fiji last night put them into second place in the qualifying table with a match left.

The islanders have nine points, but face a massive challenge in their last game against Australia. NZ, after its 10-0 demolition of a poor Tahiti team yesterday afternoon, has six points and a much superior goal difference.

There are two scenarios by which the Solomons could bring off a boilover. The odds against are huge, but if they snatch a draw against Australians, they would finish on 10 points, which could not be matched by NZ. The best the Kiwis can get is nine, if they beat Fiji in their last game. But if the Fijians can get over their disappointment at last night's loss and draw with the All Whites, that would be enough to put the Solomons into second place, even if they were hammered by Australia.

For NZ, the equation is simple. It has to beat Fiji, and hope the Solomons lose to Australia.

Socceroo coach Frank Farina said there was no temptation to manipulate the result of the match with the Solomons so that Australia would face the island team in the World Cup play-off. "The result is obviously more important to New Zealand than it is to us. But if we don't win, we will be criticised, and I have had enough criticism," Farina said.

It was a thrilling encounter between Fiji and the Solomons, in which a controversial decision by Vanuatu referee Harry Attison played a crucial role. With the scores level 14 minutes from time, Fijian front man Veresa Toma went down in the area after a heavy challenge from Solomons goalkeeper Felix Ray. Attison waved away penalty appeals, and seven minutes later, Solomons defender Mahlon Houkarawa scored the decisive goal, toe-poking the ball home after Batram Suri's free-kick came back off the angle of the crossbar and post.

The Solomons opened the scoring on 16 minutes through Paul Kakai and Toma levelled for the Fijians five minutes later.

Later, a "devastated" Fiji coach Tony Buesnel said his team would do all it could to beat NZ and help the Solomons achieve a surprise result. "We have to do a service to ourselves and our fellow islanders," he said. "I am devastated by the result, but we are going to do everything in our power to get something out of Sunday's game. If we get the opportunity to put them (Solomons) in, we will."

OFC Nations Cup / World Cup Qualifying Round, Second Stage, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
6th. June 2004, 20.00			Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide, South Australia								3500		
Australia..2 v. Solomon Islands..2													
half time, Australia..0 v. Solomon Islands..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	Felix Ray Junior				
2	DF	Jade North					2	DF	Leslie Leo				
14	DF	Patrick Kisorbo		42	56		3	DF	Mahlon Houkarawa				
16	DF	David Tarka				46*	6	DF	Nelson Sale Kilifa				
20	DF	Adrian Madaschi					21	DF	George Suri				
7	MF	Brett Emerton	52				7	MF	Alick Maemae				
8	MF	Josip Skoko					14	MF	Jack Samani				63
9	MF	John Aloisi					18	MF	Henry Samuel Luito'o Fa'arodo Junior				
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	50				19	MF	Paul Junior Kakai				63*
12	FW	Alex Brosque				46	10	FW	Batram Suri				
19	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				46**	11	FW	Commins Menapi	43, 75	16		
SUBSTITUTES													
22	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					20	GK	Severino Aefi				
4	DF	Simon Colosimo				46	22	GK	Francis Aruwafu				
6	MF	Scott Chipperfield					4	DF	Martin Ruhasia				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					5	DF	Phillip Boe				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					8	FW	Joel Konofilia				
15	FW	Mile Sterjovski				46**	9	MF	George Aba				
17	FW	David Zdrilic					12	MF	Francis Wasi				
21	FW	Ahmad Elrich				46*	13	MF	George Lui		89		63
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					15	MF	Moses Toata				
							16	MF	Stanley Waita				63*
							17	DF	Gideon Omokirio				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Alan Gillet				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Eduardo Iturralde Gonzalez (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tony Meltetamat (Vanuatu)											
Assistant Referee 2		Dhirendra Kewal (Fiji)											

match report from AAP

Solomon Islands striker Commins Menapi tonight humiliated and shocked Australia with two goals to earn the Melanesian soccer minnow a draw with the Socceroos which cost New Zealand a World Cup qualification play-off berth.

The result means Australia will now face the Solomons, ranked 154th in the world, in a two-legged World Cup play-off in September next year. The winner of that will play the fifth-ranked South American side for a place at Germany 2006.

Australian coach Frank Farina expressed contempt earlier this week for the notion that the Socceroos could lie down in this match to let the Solomons through and avoid more dangerous play-off against NZ.

While Australia didn't throw the match, Farina did pick a very inexperienced starting line-up tonight.

New Zealanders will see the result as akin to cricket's under-arm bowling incident but the All Whites have only themselves to blame for the situation after losing 4-2 to Vanuatu during the week.

Vanuatu finished last in the six-team tournament.

A limp Australia was outplayed in the first half, with the Solomons having five shots at goal before the Socceroos had their first shot, in the 37th minute.

The Socceroos were made to pay when Menapi dummied around defender Adrian Madaschi in the 44th minute, and smashed in a beautiful left-footed goal to put the Solomons in front.

Farina made three halftime substitutions, putting on Simon Colosimo, Mile Sterjovski, and Ahmad Elrich, at the expense of Max Vieri, David Tarka and Alex Brosque, who had poor first halves.

It made a difference, with Australia scoring through Tim Cahill, his sixth goal in three Socceroos matches, in the 51st minute, and through Brett Emerton with a neat volley in the 53rd, from a chipped Elrich cross, to hit the lead. But, after looking to be in control, the game changed dramatically when defender Patrick Kisorbo received his second yellow card for a crude tackle four minutes later, reducing the Socceroos to ten men.

And Menapi sent his side into raptures in the 75th minute, when he levelled the scores, hitting a firm, low left-footer past a static defence and goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac, to create the Solomons' greatest soccer moment and one of Australia's lowest.

OFC Nations Cup Final, 1st.Leg													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. October 2004,			Lawson Tama Stadium, Honiara, Solomon Islands				Very hot					21000	
Solomon Islands..1 v. Australia..5													
half time, Solomon Islands..0 v. Australia..4													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Felix Ray Junior						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Leslie Leo						DF	Lucas Neill				71
3	DF	Mahlon Houkarawa						DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
5	DF	George Suri						DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
6	DF	Nelson Sale Kilifa						DF	Kevin Muscat				
7	MF	Alick Maemae						DF	Simon Colosimo				
13	MF	George Lui		X				MF	Brett Emerton	44			61
14	MF	Jack Samani						MF	Josip Skoko	5, 28			
19	MF	Paul Junior Kakai						MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		40		61*
10	FW	Batram Suri (c)	59					FW	Ahmad Elrich	79			
18	FW	Henry Samuel Luito'o Fa'arodo Junior						FW	Ante Milicic	19			
SUBSTITUTES													
11	FW	Commins Menapi						DF	Jonathon McKain				71
4	DF	Martin Ruhasia						DF	Luke Wilkshire				61
8	FW	Joel Konofilia						FW	Mile Sterjovski				61*
9	FW	Kidston Billy Olomani											
16	MF	Stanley Waita											
17	DF	Gideon Omokirio											
22	GK	Francis Aruwafu											
Team Coach		Allan Gillet					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Peter O'Leary (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Paul Dunham (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Dhirendra Kewal (Fiji)											

match report from Soccer Australia

The Qantas Socceroos secured a convincing 5-1 victory over the Solomon Islands in the first leg of the Oceania Nations Cup Final played in Honiara today. The first of the two-match series, which doubles as the qualifier for the 2005 FIFA Confederations Cup, was played in extreme mid-afternoon heat in front of a boisterous capacity crowd of 21,000 at the Lawson Tama Stadium.

First half goals to Josip Skoko (2), Ante Milicic and Brett Emerton, plus a late goal to Ahmad Elrich was enough to see off a spirited challenge from the home side.

The Australian side started the game in spectacular fashion scoring through Skoko in just the 5th minute and by halftime the match was seemingly over with the visitors holding a 4-0 lead.

Emerton producing a stunning virtuoso display in the first stanza playing a significant role in each of the first three goals before getting on the scoresheet himself a minute before the interval.

Earlier Qantas Socceroo striker Milicic scored from close range while Skoko grabbed his second on the half hour mark when Emerton broke through and drew the goalkeeper before squaring for Skoko to score with ease.

The home side weren't without their chances with striking duo Batram Suri and Commins Menapi both having good chances to score in the first half.

Despite the lopsided scoreline the Solomons continued to push forward and were finally rewarded for their endeavour with Menapi sending the home crowd into raptures with a deserved goal in the 57th minute.

Play having to be held up for a full three minutes as the pitch was cleared of items having been thrown in the air by the crowd amongst joyous scenes.

The heat took it's toll on the Australians with the home side dominating periods of the second half carving out a number of chances to score. Frank Farina replacing the tiring legs of European-based trio Emerton,

Vince Grella and Lucas Neill with Mile Sterjovski and debutants Luke Wilkshire and Jon McKain.

Flankman Elrich was rewarded for a tireless display with a goal ten minutes from time after a superb build-up involving several players. The goal deflating the home side with the match petering out in the dying stages.

Australian coach Frank Farina was delighted with his team's performance in the extreme conditions "Overall I'm very happy with both the result and the performance, it was a very professional job from the whole team in what were very trying and difficult conditions."

OFC Nations Cup Final, 2nd.Leg													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
12th. October 2004, 19.30			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, Sydney New South Wales								19208		
Australia..6 v. Solomon Islands..0													
half time, Australia..2 v. Solomon Islands..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Felix Ray Junior				
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					3	DF	Mahlon Houkarawa				88
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar	60				5	DF	George Suri				
2	DF	Kevin Muscat				46	6	DF	Nelson Sale Kilifa				
4	DF	Lucas Neill					17	DF	Gideon Omokirio				
3	MF	Simon Colosimo					7	MF	Alick Maemae				75
15	MF	Luke Wilshire					8	MF	Joel Konofilia				
7	MF	Brett Emerton	86				13	MF	George Lui				
8	MF	Josip Skoko				46*	18	MF	Henry Samuel Luito'o Fa'arodo Junior				
10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell	8			46**	10	FW	Batram Suri (c)				46
22	FW	Ante Milicic	5				11	FW	Commings Menapi				
SUBSTITUTES													
16	DF	Jonathon McKain				46	9	FW	Kidston Billy Olomani				46
21	MF	Ahmad Elrich	82			46*	2	DF	Leslie Leo				88
17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	79			46**	14	MF	Jack Samani				75
9	FW	John Aloisi					4	DF	Martin Ruhasia				
11	MF	Mile Sterjovski					16	MF	Stanley Waita				
12	DF	Stephen Laybutt					19	MF	Paul Junior Kakai				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					22	GK	Francis Aruwafu				
14	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri											
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac											
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Allan Gillet				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Assistant Coach		Eddie Ngava				
Referee		Leone Rakaroi (Fiji)					Team Manager		Francis Jack Kairi				
Assistant Referee 1		Paul Dunham (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Dhirendra Kewal (Fiji)											

match report from Soccer Australia

The Qantas Socceroos have qualified for the 2005 Confederations Cup in Germany, having claimed their fourth OFC Nations Cup by virtue of a convincing 6-0 win over the Solomon Islands at Aussie Stadium tonight in front of a crowd of 19,208.

The six-goal margin took the aggregate score over the two match series to 11-1, meaning the OFC Nations Cup returns to Australian shores after a four-year absence.

Ante Milicic started the deluge of goals in the fifth minute, before Harry Kewell, Tony Vidmar, Archie Thompson, Ahmad Elrich and finally Brett Emerton added a goal each to extend Australia's unbeaten run to seven matches.

Australian coach Frank Farina was understandably contented with his side's performance and relieved the Socceroos passage to Germany in 2005 was now assured.

"It's always tough for the players to come into games like that where you're 5-1 up," said Farina after the match. "I was pleased, I thought they carried on with it in the second half, the three guys that came on added a lot of spark."

Although thoroughly dominating the first half, Australia got on the scoresheet only twice, with both goals arriving in the opening exchanges.

The slick one touch passing and clever movement of the Socceroos consistently created openings in the Solomons defence, Emerton and Josip Skoko particularly effective.

It was Skoko who was largely responsible for the match opener, after his delicate chip found an advancing Milicic, who made no mistake in poking home his second goal in as many matches for the national team.

Kewell, in his first OFC Nations Cup appearance, was on hand to double Australia's advantage just four minutes later.

From an Emerton corner, the Liverpool midfielder was able to stab home Tony Popovic's header into the back of the net, a goal that effectively killed the Solomons early enthusiasm.

Following Kewell's goal, the Solomons grinded out a determined half hour of soccer, negating whatever attacks Farina's men could muster with resilient and often desperate defence.

Farina introduced Under 23's Ahmad Elrich and Jon McKain, as well as Lierse marksman Archie Thompson at the break, in a bid to add some spark to what had been, at times, a flat looking Socceroo outfit.

What followed was much of the same, as the Socceroos constantly peppered the Solomons goal to seemingly minimal avail.

Cardiff City defender Vidmar, the most capped international in the Australian line up, broke the visitors resilience somewhat fortuitously 15 minutes into the half.

Brisbane based midfielder Joel Konofilia headed another Emerton corner straight into Vidmar's path, leaving Felix Ray helpless in the Solomons goal.

Australia's raids on goal seemed relentless from here on in and three of the Socceroos better performed players of the night had goals to show for it.

Thompson scored his first goal in green and gold colours in three years when he calmly slotted a precise through ball from Emerton on 79 minutes, before turning provider for Elrich in similar circumstances moments later.

Blackburn Rovers midfielder Emerton, arguably the player of the two match series, scored a richly deserved goal in the dying minutes when side footing an unselfish square ball from Milicic to confirm the score line at 6-0.

The Socceroos will now travel to Germany in June 2005 to compete in their third Confederations Cup, where they will meet Greece, Brazil, Argentina, Tunisia, Japan, Mexico and the hosts in what has traditionally been a very successful tournament for the newly crowned Oceania champions.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
16th. November 2004, 15.35			Craven Cottage, London, England									7364	
Norway..2 v. Australia..2													
half time, Norway..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Thomas Myhre						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
	DF	Hassan El Fakiri						DF	Lucas Neill				
	DF	Erik Hagen						DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
	DF	Claus Lundekvam				46		DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
	DF	John Arne Riise						MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				54
	MF	Thomas Holm				46*		MF	Josip Skoko	58			
	MF	Magne Hoseth						MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				46
	FW	Alexander Ødegaard				46**		MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	44			77
	FW	Steffen Iversen	40			78		MF	Brett Emerton				77*
	FW	Morten Gamst Pedersen	72					FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
	FW	John Carew				62		FW	Mark Viduka				
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Ragnvald Soma				46		DF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				54
	MF	Ardian Gashi				46*		MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				46
	FW	Bengt Sæternes				46**		MF	Scott Chipperfield				77
	DF	Brede Hangeland				78		FW	Ahmad Elrich				77*
	FW	Azar Karadas				62		GK	Zeljko Kalac				
	GK	Espen Johnsen						DF	Stephen "Steve" Laybutt				
	MF	Tommy Svindal Larsen						DF	Jonathon McKain				
	FW	Sigurd Rushfeldt						DF	Kevin Muscat				
	MF	Jan Gunnar Solli						FW	Mile Sterjovski				
	DF	André Bergdølmo											
	DF	John Inge Høiland											
Team Coach		Åge Frithjof Hareide					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Robert Styles (England)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from The Sydney Morning Herald

Australia has squandered a late lead to draw 2-2 with Norway in their soccer international in London.

Goals to Tim Cahill and Josip Skoko continued Australia's unbeaten record from its games in London in the last 20 months, including wins over England, Jamaica and South Africa.

After Cahill had levelled the scores just before halftime, Skoko took Australia to a 2-1 lead in the 57th minute following clever lead-up work by defender Lucas Neill.

Neill weaved his way through the defence to combine with Mark Viduka who trapped the ball, turned and delivered a deft return ball for the Blackburn defender, who was felled by the defence inside the penalty area but Skoko was on hand to fire in the goal.

But the Norwegians struck back to equalise through a sweet glancing header from Morten Gamst Pedersen in the 72nd minute.

The Socceroos, wearing black armbands in honour of the late Johnny Warren, threw everything into the last few minutes but shots by Marco Bresciano and Harry Kewell flew wide and high while an outstretched Viduka just failed to connect with the ball in the dying moments.

Although Australia dominated the first quarter of an hour, once Norway worked itself into the match and produced two threatening chances before Steffen Iversen finally converted to near silence from the predominately Australian crowd of only 7,364 at Craven Cottage, the home ground of English premiership club Fulham.

Magne Hoseth's bullet shot from 30 metres was parried away by Mark Schwarzer at full stretch but Iversen was at the Australian goalkeeper's feet to tap in the rebound and the Scandinavian were 1-0 up after 40 minutes.

As soon as Norway opened the scoring, the Australians picked up the tempo and replied three minutes later through Cahill to go into halftime 1-1.

After Brett Emerton and Cahill ventured into the penalty box, the Everton midfielder latched onto a brilliant ball from Marco Bresciano to even the scores.

Bresciano lobbed a perfectly weighted chip over the defence which lofted over Cahill's right shoulder and he picked up the half volley with his right foot to send the ball past Myhre for his seventh goal in five games for Australia.

2005

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. February 2005, 19.45			ABSA Stadium, Durban, Republic of South Africa									30000	
Republic of South Africa..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Republic of South Africa..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
16	GK	Calvin Marlin					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Cyril Nzama					3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				
4	DF	Aaron Mokoena					4	DF	Lucas Neill				
5	DF	Nasief Morris					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
7	DF	Quinton Fortune					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
8	MF	Benedict Vilakazi				90	12	MF	Daniele "Danny" Tiatto				57
9	MF	Shaun Bartlett				64	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				70
10	MF	Steven Pienaar				79	14	MF	Jason Culina				57*
13	FW	Thabiso Rammile					7	FW	Brett Emerton				66
17	FW	Benedict McCarthy	12			56	23	FW	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				74
18	FW	Delron Buckley				46	9	FW	Paul Agostino				66*
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	Tyren Arendse				90	8	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				66
20	MF	Sandile Ndlovu				64	11	MF	Scott Chipperfield	71			57
14	MF	Siyabonga Nomvethe				79	20	MF	Luke Wilshire				70
15	MF	Sibusiso Zuma				56	17	MF	Mile Sterjovski				57*
6	MF	Gift Leremi				46		MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain				74
	GK	Moeneeb Josephs					15	FW	Massimiliano "Max" Vieri				66*
	DF	David Kannemeyer						GK	Clint Bolton				
12	MF	Siphiwe Mkhonza				90		DF	Stephen "Steve" Laybutt				
	MF	Jabu Pule											
Team Coach		Stuart Baxter					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Lim Kee Chong (Mauritius)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from Thomas Esamie

A large part of the first half was effected by a powerful electrical storm which brought lightning, thunder and torrential rain which fell for large parts of the game.

For all the skill and flow of the South Africans they only had one goal to their credit. A run down the left flank and a pass towards the junction of penalty box and goal line was met Pienaar who sent the ball into the box with his first touch. Although there were plenty of defenders for Australia, Shaun Bartlett was unchallenged in meeting the ball with his chest. The chested ball was directed into the path of Benny McCarthy who left footed the ball through the legs of a defender, past the outstretched arm of Schwarzer and into the scoring side of the side netting. Only just over 10 minutes through, it could end up grim.

South Africa for their part were exhibiting a much more appealing and successful brand of football. Quentin Fortune, in particular, did well to orchestrate the midfield and unlike a lot of the Australian players when they received a pass, the ball stayed in the general vicinity of the feet. Usually there were people to pass to and those people were moving in interesting directions.

At the half-hour mark Brett Emerton managed to get free on the flank and raced towards goal. The first shot was pushed away by the keeper and by the time Brett had his chance to have another go he was almost over the goal line and unable to pass to anyone.

There were not really any other occasions in the first half where Australia had a decent scoring opportunity. Earlier there was a free kick at the outer limits of goal scoring range which Bresciano managed to smack into the face of one of the bricks in the wall. Not much of a scoring opportunity.

At the resumption of play the South Africans had made only one substitution and Australia none. It seems the play, though still favouring the home side, had moved up the field a little more and that the aimless long balls were replaced by a more circumspect approach.

The game was now a little more even with Australia getting into scoring positions somewhat more readily but South Africa were still having the better of things.

The main difference appeared to be that when the South Africans moved forward they had more options and moved faster. Whether this was confidence, greater ability or just plain good coaching is hard to say but there was a stark contrast between watching them and seeing Australia choose the possession option. Not that keeping the ball is a bad idea but if the option is move it forward and lose the ball or move it back and lose the ball you'd think you pick the option that keeps the ball as far away from your goal as possible.

So there it was, Australia were being outplayed by a more skilful side but still only sitting at 1-0 down.

Frank Farina had probably seen enough and bolstered his attacking options and, surprisingly, also took off Emerton who was one of the shinier stars in the unfamiliar all white strip.

As usual changing half the side means the game will change, but the upshot was that Australia started to do a lot better.

A rather innocent looking free kick awarded to Australia in the forward half was aimed at one of the many heads assembled in the box and bounced away, almost innocently, waiting for a defender to clean it up.

Scott Chipperfield, however, was faster and not only got to the ball first but then decided to swing his leg at it and managed to connect sweetly. The ball went over the top of the players in the box and just snuck under the crossbar.

As the match petered out and the crowd was starting to thin, the feeling was that both sides felt happy enough. Even the rain had stopped, or at least became imperceptible.

Certainly there were still opportunities, and the shots at goal still heavily favoured the home side by the end of the match and just as the 93rd minute was complete the promising young Ndolvu met a neat cross to get a header in which ended just wide of the goal.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
26th. March 2005, 19.00			Telstra Stadium, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)									30258	
Australia..2 v. Iraq..1													
half time, Australia..1 v. Iraq..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					30	GK	Sarmad Salih Rasheed				
4	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Haiedar Abdul Razzaq Hassan		76		
3	DF	Craig Moore (c)					5	DF	Nashat Akram Abid Ali				
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					11	DF	Hawar Mulla Mohammed Taher Zebari				
11	DF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				46	12	DF	Yasser Raad Mohammed		67		
8	MF	Josip Skoko					14	DF	Haidar Abdul-Amir Hussain				
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	22			63	15	MF	Mahdi Karim Ajeel				86
13	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		20		71	16	MF	Wissam Zaki				
7	FW	Brett Emerton				71*	9	FW	Mohammad Nasir	11			79
14	FW	Scott Chipperfield				63*	19	FW	Haitham Kadhim Tahir				63
15	FW	John Aloisi						FW	Ahmad Kadhim Assad				
SUBSTITUTES													
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				46	7	MF	Safwan Hamad Mohammed				86
20	DF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain				63	8	FW	Ali Jabir				79
19	MF	Jason Culina				71	4	FW	Moaid Salim				63
21	MF	Ahmad Elrich	72			71*	1	GK	Wasim Kasid				
39	MF	Mile Sterjovski		88		63*	3	MF	Aqeel Abdul Hussain				
13	GK	Clint Bolton					18	DF	Haidar Obeid Jassim				
38	DF	Stephen "Steve" Laybutt					21	GK	Hassain Ali				
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Akram Salman				
Team Manager		Phillip Wolanski					Team Manager		Hussain S.Mohammed				
Referee		Peter O'Leary (New Zealand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Nathan Gibson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Peter Vrtkovski (Australia)											

match report from Thomas Esamie

In a way the match itself was secondary to the 'event'. In the past few weeks a great many things have happened and while I am unsure of whether this was the original intent, it turns out that only a few weeks after rumours that Australia was seeking to leave Oceania and join the AFC, and mere days after the AFC president Bin Hamman endorsed this move, Australia play Asian opposition twice in the space of a few days.

The news is generally seen as a positive move and not purely because it will get Australia away from qualifying for the World Cup against a South American side. The added benefits (read income) from involvement in things like Asian championships, Club competitions and so on, start to boggle the mind. Of course it does nothing for 2006 qualification.

You sort of know there's bigger things at play when the AFC president and the Prime Minister of Australia rock up to shake hands with all the players before the start of the game. It might be expected at a big match, like a World Cup qualifier, but not some "meaningless friendly". John Howard, the current Prime Minister of Australia, is a well known cricket fan, and as he was doing the handshake thing was he even aware of who the players were, and I mean the Australian ones.

The other noteworthy thing was the number of Iraqi supporters. There's been a bit of history of visiting teams being better supported than the locals, and while the overwhelming majority were there to support the Socceroos the colour and noise from the Iraqi fans was much more impressive than the show for the locals. They assembled early and during the curtain raiser match between the Aussies and Japan (womens) they practiced their Iraq chants. Then while the main event was drawing close a massive cheer went up for the Iraqi players.

On the bright side my initial discomfort about the venue was dispelled. The Olympic Stadium, or Telstra Stadium if you want to keep the sponsors happy, is rather large and playing a friendly invites a poor turnout which makes a poor crowd look worse in a large venue. The normal place to play, the 40000+ Sydney Football Stadium, or Sydney Football (Aussie) Stadium for the sponsors, was in use for the Super 12 game involving the NSW Waratahs. I'm not sure if it was the adjoining Easter Show, better advertising or just a change in the general popularity of football but in excess of 30,000 people showed up. This on a day when it had been raining.

The match kicked off over 20 minutes late and the early minutes looked promising for Australia as they managed to hold most of the possession and looked to be the more technical of the sides. The Iraqi goalkeeper was kept busy in this opening period and he looked competent, though he did seem to enjoy flinging himself around even when it wasn't strictly required. For their part the Iraqis showed a great deal of speed and a good dose of close control.

It looked like Australia had it under control but after 11 minutes, when Iraq were playing the ball across their backline, the ball was launched forward. The only people more surprised than me were playing in Australia's back line. In any event the fleetfooted Mohammad Nasir outpaced the defenders and stretched his boot towards the bouncing ball and looped it over the stranded Schwarzer. Cue pandemonium in the south eastern section of the stadium.

This changed the game somewhat. Iraq suddenly were as convinced as their supporters that they could pull this off and in their rush to equalise Australia suddenly looked a lot less methodical. Small surprise then that the referee pulled out a yellow card to remind Australia what happens when you try too hard to shortcut your way to an equalizer. Actually that particular event resulted in a free kick for Iraq and the ball registered on the radar for Sydney Airport for a while.

It was then that a similarly positioned free kick at the opposite end barely two minutes later had such a markedly different result. In Marco Bresciano it seems Australia finally has someone who knows what to do with a free kick and not a moment too soon. The Iraqi keeper did get his hands to it as he dived to save the shot, but was eventually only successful in palming the ball into his own net. The roar of the crowd this time was much louder.

The match ebbed and flowed for the remainder of the half. Australia never quite regained the confidence they started off with and Iraq tried hard but didn't get that luck they enjoyed when they scored. Towards the end of the half Schwarzer managed to fumble the ball and Ahmed Assad failed to beat him to the slightly loose ball.

At half time Stan Lazaridis made way for Tony Vidmar, I hardly noticed Stan so I guess it was fair enough.

In the 8th minute, or so, of the second half Assad managed to thread a pass forward to Nasir who ran onto it beautifully and took his shot at goal. Schwarzer had spread himself and I had a suspicion it had clipped him, but the absence of a subsequent corner suggests I was wrong. However it did clip the side of the post, but as far as Iraq was concerned it was the wrong side of the post.

The rain started falling for about 10-15 minutes soon after that. Not heavily but enough to make me think of the final result being decided on some goalmouth pinball after the goalkeeper failed to handle a cross, or something similar.

In an attempt to spark some change Frank Farina subbed off Bresciano and Chipperfield and brought on Sterjovski and McKain. Akram Salman went for some fresh legs too bringing on Moaid Salim for Kadhum.

That man Assad kept threatening to score though. Notably hustling the Aussie defence so that when an underhit pass across the back took its time making the intended target he hared through and forced Mark Schwarzer into another save.

It wasn't all bad though, Australia were still presented with opportunities of their own. Craig Moore managed to get his noggin to two corners and though he didn't score he did well enough to force the Iraqis to come up with something creative to stop him scoring. So more or less the to and fro started to suggest we'd seen the last of the scoring.

Then Farina took off Emerton and Cahill and put on Elrich and Culina. With his first touch of the match Elrich controlled the pass from midfield and with his second he stroked the ball cross the face of goal, it bobbed over the outstretched hand of the Iraqi keeper and slid neatly into the side netting at the far post. Elrich ran to the fans justifiably elated and probably got a few thrown out for jumping the perimeter fence. The crowd rose in a wild cheer. It was just the tonic for a game in serious danger of petering out in a mediocre draw.

Not content with showing off with the winning goal Ahmad Elrich then has another shot at goal barely 2 minutes later which ends up over the bar. A few substitutions later and 3 minutes of added time ended up seeing the game out. Overall a performance which was not the best Australia is capable of, but at the same time you can't argue with a win.

Farina was fairly clear in his agreement that Australia is capable of better, but the Confederations Cup should make a much clearer case about how well Australia can pull together before the crucial World Cup qualifiers against the Solomon Islands and, hopefully, an as yet unknown South American opponent.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
29th. March 2005, 19.00			Subiaco Oval, Perth, Western Australia									13719	
Australia..3 v. Indonesia..0													
half time, Australia..1 v. Indonesia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	Hendro Kartiko				
	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					2	DF	Ismed Sofyan				82
	DF	Craig Moore (c)				46	3	DF	Ortizan Salossa				62
	DF	Ljubo Milicevic	24, 57				13	DF	Agus Indra Kurniawan				82*
	DF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain					17	DF	Hamka Hamzah				
	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				60	18	DF	Agus Firmansyah				
	MF	Jason Culina				76	6	MF	Mohammad Maully Lessy				89
	MF	Luke Wilkshire				60*	11	MF	Ponaryo Astaman				
	FW	Mile Sterjovski					14	MF	Firman Utina				62*
	FW	Brett Emerton				46*	16	MF	Syamsul Bachri Chaeruddin				
	FW	Ante Milicic				76*	9	FW	I Iham Jaya Kesuma				14
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				46	19	MF	Christian Worabai				82
	DF	Lucas Neill				60	23	MF	Mahyadi Panggabean				62
	DF	Jade North				76		MF	Zainal Arifin Yandri				89
	MF	Simon Colosimo				60*	5	DF	Charis Yulianto				14
	MF	Ahmad Elrich				46*	4	DF	Kamasan Jakob "Jack" Komboy				82*
	FW	David Zdrilic	85			76*	15	MF	Jimmy Surpano				62*
Team Coach		Frank Farina					Team Coach		Peter Withe				
Team Manager		Phillip Wolanski					Team Manager		Muhammad Zein				
Referee		Hirofumi Yamanishi (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Matthew Cream (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Jim Ouliaris (Australia)											

Jimmy Surpano is also shown as Jimmy Suparno.

match report from Thomas Esamie

Inside the first minute, or very soon after, Ilhan benefited from some wayward passing (well Milicevic just passed the ball to an Indonesian who just passed it forward) and the worst attempt at offside trapping I've seen all year. He was more or less through on goal, somewhat wide and chased by what I think might have been Tony Vidmar. He had a shot which was saved by the outstretched hand of Kalac and the followup shot skewed off his left foot in such a way that suggested he's very right-footed.

The bulk of the play, thankfully, did not occur at the Kalac end. Mile Sterjovski showed off some diving skills, but didn't fool the naked eye of the referee. The Indonesians weren't that good, but some of the Socceroos (although they didn't need to raise a sweat in this game) are supposedly fringe players and had a chance to impress in an A International.

Then, Stan Lazaridis, for no clear reason, suddenly realised he was playing football and easily ran past a defender on the left, wrapped his foot around the ball to send it into the middle and found the willing and able Ante Milicic who glanced the ball very nicely into the far netting with his head. It really was a very nice goal, aided by the absence of any real marking.

Ljubo Milicevic tried to make up for the defensive lapse by producing one of his own by spooning a cross by Indonesia towards his own goal. His aim was lousy and Kalac was quick and tall enough to ensure that it didn't matter. Overall though the goal did help get the Australians playing more confidently. The Indonesians played well across the back though, and made sure they made up for any technical shortcomings with weight of numbers.

40 minutes in and the Australians finally forced Hendro into a save through Sterjovski. A long ball forward was very nicely controlled by Sterjovski off his chest and a turn and shoot on the volley towards goal.

Very nice. Indonesian defence were somewhat complicit in making it look that way. Little by little it looked more likely Australia would double its lead and less likely Indonesia would remove it.

Then halftime.

Moore and Emerton off and Elrich and Popovic on. I guess it worked a few days ago but this time all it did was allow Indonesia a few more half chances at goal. Astaman, the Indonesian captain, managed to prove his commitment by earning the first yellow card of the game. It wasn't a dirty game by any stretch, although Ilhan had to be replaced in the first half to have a number of stitches in his head.

From a corner Popovic got his head on the ball sending it goalwards, straight to the keeper. If it wasn't for a foot stuck out by Milicic connecting with the ball by just enough to strand the keeper, it would have been a non-event. As it was it was the second goal. A slight suspicion of a final touch by a defender but I don't think he's in any hurry to claim it.

As the game progressed more changes were made and Australia continued to threaten the goal most of the time and Indonesia not so much. It was good to see the side improve as the match went on but it was a disappointment that they started off playing so badly, such that it was so noticeable when they improved. Now passes were going to places where there was a man with the same colour shirt on, the touches became a little more inventive. Overall though I would have to say it was still below their best.

Late in the piece Elrich and Zdrilic combined to score a third. It was a neat enough goal and well done but the opposing defence was either tiring or had just come on. Komboy was notably surprised to be chasing Elrich so soon. Elrich took the ball towards goal, passed it to a more centrally located Zdrilic who nailed it into the net on his second touch just beating the keeper to the ball.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. June 2005,			Craven Cottage, London, England									9023	
New Zealand..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, New Zealand..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Paston					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				46
6	DF	Che Bunce					2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
12	DF	Michael Wilson				78	3	DF	Craig Moore (c)		X		78
2	DF	Steven Old		X			4	DF	Lucas Neill				
5	DF	Daniel "Danny" Hay (c)					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
4	MF	David "Dave" Mulligan					17	DF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain				
16	MF	Timothy "Tim" Brown					10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				
14	MF	Noah Hickey					8	MF	Josip Skoko				63
10	FW	Brent Fisher					7	FW	Brett Emerton				75
8	FW	Vaughan Coveny				89	23	FW	Mile Sterjovski				63*
7	FW	Adrian Webster				87	11	FW	Scott Chipperfield				
SUBSTITUTES													
3	MF	Jeremy Christie				78	18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				46
17	FW	Shane Smeltz				89	20	DF	Ljubo Milicevic				78
11	FW	Leonida "Leo" Bertos				87	21	MF	Ahmad Elrich				75
							14	MF	Simon Colosimo	87			63
							22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				63*
Team Coach		Ricky Herbert					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mike Dean (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Peter Kirkup (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mike Tingey (England)											

match report from Thomas Esamie

It was really a glorified training session to help Australia prepare for next week's confederations cup matches. Australia certainly had what is commonly called the run of play and had an early opportunity after Josip Skoko was fouled just outside the box pretty much in front. The ball clipped the bar on it's way through for a goalkick.

Nevertheless New Zealand showed that they have a likely path to success, twice managing to get close on set pieces, and in the latter case a mistimed (Che Bunce) header.

Tim Cahill managed to raise the hopes of the good guys with a header at the far post which was deflected away by a NZ defender using equal parts of good positioning and good fortune. On several occasions there was a bit of penalty box pinball at the New Zealand end of the ground.

Notable also was the physicality of the match. It was probably New Zealand's best path to success but both sides were quite willing to commit to a challenge. One of Adrian Websters tackles brought a spectacular collapse of what I think was McKain. Still no card.

Brent Fisher missed a golden chance to give New Zealand an unexpected lead. Having managed to evade the last man he dragged his shot across, and wide of, Mark Schwarzer's goal.

New Zealand did get off the mark first, at least on the yellow card score, with Steven Old clumsily clattering into Josip Skoko as the latter tried to jink his way past.

As halftime rolled around the scores remained scoreless.

At half time, surprisingly, Kalac replaced Schwarzer. Less than a minute in and Jon McKain came through the middle and gave a defenders finish to a cross. It seemed that NZ had worked out that Skoko is a good player and he appears to have been singled out for "close attention" as commentators like to say. Aussie Captain Craig Moore did a good job of putting a revenge tackle on Coveny after the two battled for a header seconds earlier. Moore got a yellow card for his trouble.

Australia continues to have the bulk of play and chances. New Zealand, notably Webster with a blazing shot eluding a full stretch Kalac and the goal, have some good chances too but the score remains 0-0.

With six substitutions allowed, New Zealand still had made none by the 70th minute while Australia had made three. Che Bunce turned and weaved his own kind of magic and forced Kalac into a last ditch save.

The distinct impression is that New Zealand will come out moral winners, even if they lose.

Eventually New Zealand was forced into a substitution with a shoulder injury to Wilson after an awkward fall in a tackle.

With about six minutes left a fierce series of attempts was valiantly blocked by New Zealand. It was as if Australia suddenly realised they were looking like coming out of this match looking worse than they did going in. A series of defensive blocks and goalkeeping heroics kept the ball out and it was sent towards Australia's end. But that only meant a brief reprieve as it was played down the left flank and played by Chipperfield towards Colosimo near the 'D' in a bit of space. Colosimo then stroked the ball inside the far post and beyond the diving hand of Paston for the lead.

Predictably they could do little to counter this suckerpunch.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
15th. June 2005, 21.00			Waldstadion, Frankfurt, Germany								46466		
Germany..4 v. Australia..3													
half time, Germany..2 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Oliver Kahn					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Arne Friedrich		69			2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
4	DF	Robert Huth		20			3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				
17	DF	Per Mertesacker	23				6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				57
7	MF	Bastian Schweinsteiger		51		83	4	DF	Lucas Neill				
8	MF	Torsten Frings					20	DF	Ljubo Milicevic		38		
13	MF	Michael Ballack (c)	60(pk)	90+3			8	MF	Josip Skoko	21			
16	MF	Thomas Hitzlsperger					10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				74
19	MF	Bernd Schneider				76	7	FW	Brett Emerton				
20	FW	Lukas Podolski	88				11	FW	Scott Chipperfield				82
22	FW	Kevin Kuranyi	17				68	15	FW	John Aloisi	30, 90+2		
SUBSTITUTES													
15	MF	Fabian Ernst				83	17	MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain				57
10	MF	Sebastian Deisler				76	19	MF	Jason Cullina				74
14	FW	Gerald Asamoah				68	22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				82
2	DF	Andreas Hinkel					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
5	DF	Patrick Owomoyela					9	FW	Mark Viduka				
6	MF	Marco Engelhardt					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
9	FW	Mike Hanke					13	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
11	FW	Thomas Brdaric					14	MF	Simon Colosimo				
12	GK	Jens Lehmann					16	FW	David Zdrilic				
18	MF	Tim Borowski					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
21	DF	Christian Schulz					21	MF	Ahmad Elrich				
23	GK	Timo Hildebrand					23	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
Team Coach		Juergen Klinsmann					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Carlos Amarilla (Paraguay)											
Assistant Referee 1		Amelio Andino (Paraguay)											
Assistant Referee 2		Manuel Bernal (Paraguay)											

match report from FIFA

Those who witnessed the breathtaking opening ceremony in the Waldstadion were hoping that the football that followed would provide similar entertainment. They were not to be disappointed. A warm summer's evening in Frankfurt provided a fascinating contest between FIFA Confederations Cup hosts Germany, spurred on by a capacity crowd, and Australia, the underdogs with nothing to lose.

Jurgen Klinsmann's side could have taken the lead in the opening 40 seconds. Almost straight from the kick-off Kevin Kuranyi played the ball to Lukas Podolski who flashed a left footed shot just wide of Mark Schwarzer's left-hand post.

The passionate German crowd were off their seats once again three minutes later when Thomas Hitzlsperger fired over from 25 yards. The Stuttgart midfielder's free-kick was headed back to him by Socceroos skipper Craig Moore and the 23-year-old blasted the return comfortably over the bar.

A neat passing move from Australia almost paid dividends when John Aloisi, Tim Cahill and Scott Chipperfield combined well down the left to put Germany under pressure. Josip Skoko joined in the attack and slipped a fine through-ball hoping to pick out Chipperfield, but Oliver Kahn was off his line to save smartly.

As the sun set in Frankfurt, the frustrations of the home fans appeared to grow as an opening goal was not forthcoming. However, they did not have to worry too long as Kuranyi scored a fine goal to put Germany ahead in the 17th minute. The Stuttgart striker showed great skill to slip his marker and divert the ball past Schwarzer from Arne Friedrich's cross.

Joy turned to despair for the supporters of the Nationalmannschaft four minutes later when Australia drew level. Robert Huth fouled Aloisi on the edge of the box and from the resulting free-kick, Skoko drilled the ball through the German wall and past the unsighted Kahn.

Per Mertesacker capped an amazing six-minute spell when he volleyed home to put Germany 2-1 ahead. The young defender finished in style from close range following Australia's inability to clear a corner kick.

But the drama was not over yet. Just as the crowd began to draw breath following the flurry of goals, Australia once again displayed their unquestionable spirit. This time the goalscorer Skoko turned architect as his precise pass picked out Aloisi's run and the striker was left with the easiest of chances to turn the ball past Kahn on 31 minutes.

The home supporters were left to rue their team's inability to hold on to a lead - raising the same questions that were asked of Germany's defence following their recent 2-2 friendly draw with Russia. It was Australia's defence, rather than Germany's, who were tested as the second half began, however. Klinsmann's side were looking to restore their lead at once but they found Schwarzer in excellent form on three separate occasions.

Three minutes into the second half the Middlesbrough keeper made a stunning stop to palm away Bastian Schweinsteiger's powerful right-footed drive. Then he saved low to deny the influential Michael Ballack from close range. And on 53 minutes, it was Schneider who was frustrated by the Aussie No1 when his curling shot was superbly tipped round the post.

Germany finally took the lead for the third time in the match on the hour when Paraguayan referee Carlos Amarilla felt that Ljubo Milicevic's challenge on Friedrich was unfair and awarded a penalty kick. Ballack stepped up to the spot and sent Schwarzer the wrong way.

Substitute Sebastian Deisler almost created Germany's fourth of the evening in the 84th minute. After a powerful run through the centre of the midfield, he found Podolski in space, but the young striker's finish was wayward. However, the Cologne man got the goal his efforts deserved when he converted Ballack's low cross to double the hosts' advantage with two minutes remaining.

Aloisi grabbed his second and Australia's third of the evening in injury time with a cool close-range finish past Kahn, but it was Germany who got their FIFA Confederations Cup campaign off to a winning start.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
18th. June 2005, 20.45			Frankenstadion, Nuremburg, Germany								25618		
Argentina..4 v. Australia..2													
half time, Argentina..2 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
12	GK	Germán Dario Lux					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Walter Adrián Luján Samuel		10			2	DF	Kevin Muscat				46
3	DF	Juan Pablo Sorin (c)					3	DF	Craig Moore (c)		90+1		
4	DF	Javier Adelmár Zanetti					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
6	DF	Gabriel Ivan Heinze					4	DF	Lucas Neill		30		
16	DF	Fabrizio Coloccini				86	20	DF	Ljubo Milicevic				56
8	MF	Juan Román Riquelme	31(pk)				8	MF	Josip Skoko				74
17	MF	Lucas Ademar Bernardi					10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		49		
9	FW	Javier Pedro Saviola Fernández				73	7	FW	Brett Emerton		43		
18	FW	Mario Alberto Santana				66	11	FW	Scott Chipperfield				
21	FW	Luciano Gabriel "Lucho" Figueroa Herrera	12, 53, 89				15	FW	John Aloisi	61(pk), 70			
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Leonardo "Leo" Neoren Franco					17	MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain				56
5	DF	Esteban Matias "Cuchu" Cambiasso Deleau				66	19	MF	Jason Culina				74
7	FW	Carlos Alberto Martínez Tevez					22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
10	MF	Pablo César Aimar Giordano				73	6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
11	FW	César Fabián Delgado Godoy					9	FW	Mark Viduka				46
13	DF	Gonzalo Javier Rodríguez Prado				86	12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
14	DF	Gabriel Alejandro Milito					13	MF	Luke Wilshire				
15	DF	Diego Rodolfo Placente					14	MF	Simon Colosimo				
19	MF	Maximiliano Rubén "Maxi" Rodríguez					16	FW	David Zdrilic				
20	MF	Martin Gastón Demichelis					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
22	FW	Luciano Martin Galletti					21	MF	Ahmad Elrich				
23	GK	Wilfredo Daniel "Willy" Caballero Lazcano					23	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
Team Coach		Jose Pekerman					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Shamsul Maidin (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 1		Prachya Permpanich (Thailand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Bengech Allaberdyev (Turkmenistan)											

match report from FIFA

Argentina claimed their place alongside Germany in the last four of the FIFA Confederations Cup as striker Luciano Figueroa struck a hat-trick in a 4-2 victory over Australia in Nuremberg's Frankenstadion on Saturday 18 June.

In the build-up to the game, all the signs indicated that this was a match Australia desperately wanted to do well in. The theory was that a solid performance would not only revive their hopes of progressing in the tournament but also boost morale ahead of a possible play-off against a South American side for a spot at next year's FIFA World Cup.

And so it transpired. Undaunted by their opponents, the Oceania side took control of the early play and had the Albicelestes on the back foot dealing with Scott Chipperfield incursions down the left.

Two crosses from the Australian in quick succession put some early pressure on German Lux's goal. The first found Josip Skoko, who could not get his shot on target from just inside the box, while the second picked out Tim Cahill, who also failed to test the goalkeeper with a free header from no more than six yards.

As for Jose Pekerman's side, again they looked to their inspirational playmaker Juan Riquelme to carve out the openings. His front men looked slightly out of sync early on, but it only took one exquisite move to find the back of Mark Schwarzer's net. Riquelme threaded a delightful ball to Mario Santana, who laid it off to Luciano Figueroa. The striker then worked a quick one-two with his team-mate before powering his left-foot shot high into the top corner.

The goal settled Argentine nerves and forced Frank Farina's men to take the game to their opponents even more. Chipperfield again broke down left and this time his cross took a deflection off Fabricio Coloccini, forcing a save from Lux.

This would be the Socceroos' last excursion into their opponent's penalty area for some time. Argentina, controlling the tempo and possession, waited patiently for another opening. It duly arrived after Santana flighted a ball in behind the Australian defence for Javier Saviola to run on to. Lucas Neill was adjudged to have dragged the striker to the ground and Riquelme tucked away the ensuing penalty for his second successful spot-kick in as many games.

Comfortably ahead, Argentina concentrated on keeping possession and moving the ball around. With Farina's men striving without much success to gain control of the midfield, the latter part of the first half looked to be quietly coming to a close.

Then Cahill found space in the Albiceleste area, but just as he was about to shoot, Gabriel Heinze took the ball off his toe. Meanwhile at the other end, Figueroa managed to get between four Australian defenders after a corner but narrowly failed to extend his side's lead when his header clipped the crossbar and sailed over.

Knowing that a defeat would mean the end of the road for his side, Farina threw on another striker at half-time, with the experienced Mark Viduka replacing Kevin Muscat. Argentina, for their part, opted to defend deep and put their faith in their tried and tested counterattacking skills.

It was not long before the chances stated to arrive, with Juan Pablo Sorin's header a sign of things to come. A move started by Javier Zanetti down the right ended with a half-cleared ball in the area falling nicely for Figueroa. Once again the striker showed no mercy, scoring with another left-foot drive that looked to have settled the match.

Refusing to throw in the towel, however, Australia continued to press and finally got their reward after another inspired move from John Aloisi. Just as he did against Germany, the Osasuna man showed himself to be a true leader as he drove his men forward.

First he won a penalty from which he cut his side's deficit, then he was on hand to fire home from point-blank range after Heinze mistakenly chested a back-pass into his path. A string of earlier missed chances were now looking costly as Pekerman's side found themselves scrapping to keep their hold on a game they thought they had won.

The final 20 minutes were pulsating in the extreme, with Farina's men desperately searching for the point that would keep their hopes alive, and Argentina trying to take the sting out of the match with the introduction of Pablo Aimar.

Sorin almost got on the score sheet after another well-worked move, but his deft chip over Schwarzer failed to find the target. Throwing caution to the wind, the brave surges of the Socceroos were leaving wider and wider gaps at the back.

Javier Zanetti almost got Argentina's fourth moments later but his well-struck right-foot shot went narrowly over. However, Figueroa then capped a wonderful individual display with his third and Argentina's fourth when he found space at the far post to tap in.

There was no time for more. Argentina march on to the semi-finals with a group game to spare. Australia bow out with their heads held high. The standing ovation of the 25,000 fans will hopefully be some consolation to the valiant Australians.

Confederations Cup, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
21st. June 2005, 20.45			Zentralstadion, Leipzig, Germany								23952		
Tunisia..2 v. Australia..0													
half time, Tunisia..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
22	GK	Hamdi Kasraoui					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
2	DF	Karim Ben Ahmed Saidi					3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				
6	DF	Hatem Trabelsi (c)					4	DF	Lucas Neill				
19	DF	Anis Ayari		88			5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
8	MF	Mehdi Ben Sadok Nafti		90			8	MF	Josip Skoko				61
12	MF	Jawhar Mnari					14	MF	Simon Colosimo		39		
13	MF	Hamed Namouchi					17	MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain		25		
14	MF	Adel Ben-Bechir Chedli				55	19	MF	Jason Culina				
9	FW	Haykel Guemamdja					9	FW	Mark Viduka				46
11	FW	Francileudo Silva dos Santos	26, 70			89	11	FW	Scott Chipperfield				38
17	FW	Chaouki Ben Saada		28		69	15	FW	John Aloisi				
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Ali Boumnijel					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Karim Essediri					2	DF	Kevin Muscat				
4	DF	Wisam El Abdy					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
5	FW	Zied Jaziri				89	7	FW	Brett Emerton				
7	FW	Imed Mhedhebi					10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		62		61
10	MF	Kaies Ghodhbane				69	13	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
15	DF	Radhi Ben Abdelmajid Jaïdi					16	FW	David Zdrilic				
16	GK	Khaled Fadhel					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
18	MF	Slim Benachour					20	DF	Ljubo Milicevic				38
20	DF	José Cláyton Menezes Ribeiro					21	MF	Ahmad Elrich				
21	FW	Issam Jemâa				55	22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson		90		46
23	DF	Amir Hadj Massaoued					23	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
Team Coach		Roger Lemerre					Team Coach		Frank Farina				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Carlos Chandia (Chile)											
Assistant Referee 1		Cristian Julio (Chile)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mario Vargas (Chile)											

Wisam El Abdy is also shown as Wissem Abdi, Imed Mhedhebi is also shown as Imed Mhadhbi, Slim Ben-Achour is also shown as Selim Benachour, and Amir Hadj Massaoued is also shown as Amir Hadj Messoud.

match report from Football Federation Australia

Tunisia has ensured that the Confederations Cup has turned into a nightmare for Frank Farina and the Socceroos after inflicting a 2-0 defeat on Australia in Leipzig.

The result means that Australia finish bottom of the group with no points and nothing to show for encouraging performances against Germany and Argentina.

Once again questions will be asked about Australia-s defence, as both goals came from defensive lapses, the second though must be said was a touch unlucky.

Farina decided to start with fresh legs for this game, making five changes to the starting line-up. Trabzonspor keeper Michael Petkovic made his first appearance for the national teams in four years, while also in the line-up came Simon Colosimo, Jon McKain, Jason Culina and Mark Viduka.

The Viduka, Aloisi combination up front, meant Farina changed the system employed for the past year, going back to a 4-4-2.

The first ten minutes saw Australia start brightly enough, but were not able to create any inroads in the Tunisian defence.

The first shot came via Tunisia in the 11th minute, with Ben Saada testing Petkovic with a long range effort, which the former South Melbourne keeper handled comfortably.

However this seemed to lift the Tunisian's and they started to play their possession game and win a lot of ball in midfield.

Tunisia thought they had taken the lead in the 23rd minute, when Chadli curled in a free kick from wide on the left that beat everyone in the box and bounced past Petkovic aqt the far post. However is was ruled away, for it was an indirect free kick and needed another touch before going across the line.

However the African champions didn't have to wait long, just three minutes in fact, for the opening goal and it's one Petkovic will care to forget in a hurry.

A harmless cross from Trabelsi, looked to have Petkovic's name written all over it, but just as he was about to catch it, Lucas Neill nudged him, forcing the ball to slip through his hands, where Dos Santos was gratefully waiting and he swept the ball into the empty net.

Tunisia's confidence was soaring now and they continually had the Australian defence under pressure.

Australia's first genuine attempt at goal was in the 29th minute, a long range volley from Culina that was well wide, but generally for the half, the attack was listless and given no space by the smothering Tunisian defence.

Tunisian striker Guemamdja should have done better when presented with a chance after 33 minutes but blazed over the bar.

Farina's plans and experiment to have Scott Chipperfield playing as a fullback was also brought to a premature end ten minutes before the break, when he was forced off with an ankle injury, with Ljubo Milicevic coming on in central defence and Tony Vidmar moving out to the left fullback position.

Australia's best chance of the half didn't arrive until deep into first half injury time, when Skoko played a great diagonal ball to Culina on the right, but his shot from a narrowing angle went wide of the near post. Perhaps that was a sign of things to come in the second half and Farina decided not to continue with Viduka for the second half, making way for Melbourne Victory striker Archie Thompson.

The move looked a good one and Thompson's pace and mobility almost caught Tunisia out in the 48th minute, when he beat the offside trap, but the keeper was out quickly to snuff out Skoko's excellent through ball. Australia was now enjoying good possession and it was again a Skoko through ball for Thompson that nearly had Australia level, but the keeper again was off his line to divert Thompson's shot away for a corner.

Cahill made a rather innocuous start after coming on for Skoko just on the hour mark, making a two-footed tackle that earned him a yellow card and luckily not more.

Culina was looking increasingly threatening on the right, first crossing for Aloisi and then supplying a great cross for Cahill and Australia's best chance of the match. However Cahill's acrobatic volley on the run went wide and he was made to pay minutes later with Tunisia a second against the run of play.

Again Farina will have been left disappointed with the defence's loose marking in the area, after a cross-field pass was intercepted by captain Craig Moore, but his touch put the ball straight into the path of a free Dos Santos, who made no mistake with a blistering shot.

Colosimo almost pulled one back for Australia minutes later when his cross caught the Tunisian keeper out, but as luck would have it, it hit the crossbar and bounced away.

Thompson then had a left foot shot go straight to the keeper, before Tunisia shut up shop.

Milicevic had one last chance to score a consolation goal in injury time, but his effort was just wide and summed up Australia's miserable night.

After the match Farina lamented his team's ability to give away soft goals, but he still believes he and the team can take positives away from the tournament and that it has been very beneficial on the whole.

World Cup Qualifying Round, Group play-off 1st. Leg, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
3rd. September 2005, 19.30			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, New South Wales									14715	
Australia..7 v. Solomon Islands..0													
half time, Australia..3 v. Solomon Islands..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					20	GK	Francis Aruwafu				
2	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Leslie Leo				
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				57	3	DF	Mahlon Houkarawa				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar					6	DF	Nelson Sale Kilifa		14	53	
7	MF	Brett Emerton	89				17	DF	Gideon Omokirio				
8	MF	Josip Skoko				72	7	MF	Alick Maemae				46
10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	57				13	MF	George Lui				
19	MF	Jason Culina	21				18	MF	Henry Samuel Luito'o Fa'arodo Junior				
9	FW	Mark Viduka	36, 43				19	MF	Francis Wasi				59
15	FW	John Aloisi				61	9	FW	Kidston Billy Olomani				
12	FW	Scott Chipperfield	64				10	FW	Batram Suri				42
SUBSTITUTES													
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				57	1	GK	Felix Ray Junior				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				72	5	DF	George Suri				42
14	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	69			61	8	MF	Abraham Iniga				
17	MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain					12	DF	Richard Anisua				59
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					14	MF	Jack Samani				
21	MF	Ahmad Elrich					15	FW	Judd Molea				
22	MF	Luke Wilkshire					16	MF	Stanley Waita				46
Team Coach		Guus Hiddink					Team Coach		Ayrton Andrioli				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Subkhiddin Mohd Salleh (Malaysia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Mohammed Saeed (Maldives)											
Assistant Referee 2		Nasaruddin Ishak (Malaysia)											

match report from Chris Dunkerley

Australia has won the 1st leg of the OFC World Cup qualifier 7-0 at Aussie Stadium (SFS) Sydney in front of 14,715 fans on a damp evening. The Socceroos took 20 minutes to break down an initially well marshalled defence but two more before the break and a send off of Nelson Sale for the Solomons in the 53rd minute killed off the game. A brace to new captain Mark Viduka surprisingly increased his rate to 5 from 'A' international 29 games (from 3 in 28).

On Tuesday 12 October 2004 in the same stadium Australia won the second leg of the OFC Nations Cup final 6-0 at Aussie Stadium (SFS) Sydney in front of 19,208 fans on a balmy Spring evening, with Harry Kewell a rare star attraction. Australia qualified from that game for the Confederations Cup in Germany, which was held from 15-29 June this year, as Oceania's representative. It was that tournament that showed Australia's attacking power but defensive frailties, and ended with Socceroos six year coach Frank Farina being replaced with Dutchman Guus Hiddink. The Solomons also came with a new coach, Ayrton Andrioli, appointed like Hiddink only weeks ago.

Australia was without Harry Kewell, who had that cameo role 11 months ago, and Captain Craig Moore, out injured - with Hiddink handing the armband to Mark Viduka. The Solomon Islands team was largely that which met the Aussies last year, having had no international games since to try anyone else and only a few games in NZ in preparation.

Attacking, controlled, aggressive football - that was the Guus Hiddink promise - did we get it?

Australia applied pressure, as Guus Hiddink had promised, right from the beginning but the Solomon's looked to have steadied their defence since last year but were more timid this outing in breaking out into attack. The first real chance came in the 9th minute when John Aloisi hit a strike from the edge of the area after Mark Viduka had laid it back to him, but the shot cannoned off a defender.

In the 17th minute a great chance was cleared off the line by one of the Solomon Islands best players Leslie Leo, but after some faint hope came to the Solomons when two minutes later they got the ball to the other goal line for the first time, it was dashed.

Aloisi laid back a ball to Jason Culina, who was pushing up from midfield, in the 20th minute and the Dutch based midfielder slammed the ball past 'keeper Francis Arawafu from 15m. 1-0

After Viduka, Aloisi, and Cahill had all wasted chances crafted against the packed defensive line, the next goal came when in the 36th minute Cahill managed to get the ball under pressure to an unmarked Viduka, standing back to goal, and an acrobatic overhead kick went into the top right corner of the net. 2-0

Goal three was scored just before half-time when Josip Skoko angled an early cross superbly from the right, sailing straight to Viduka whose power header nestled in the top right corner of the net. 3-0

After the break there was little joy all the rest of the night for the visitors - starting with Nelson Sale getting a straight red card for scything down Jason Culina - the Solomons went down to 10 men, and the mountain turned into Everest!

In the 56th minute the Australians sealed a win with the fourth goal that came from a soft Cahill header that fell short but bounced high and can be attested to the 'keeper not holding, and dropping, the ball into his own net. 4-0

Substitute Marco Bresciano almost scored when his stinging ground shot in the damp conditions almost snuck under the hands of Arawafu on the goal-line.

After Archie Thompson had headed just wide with his first touch of the ball, Scott Chipperfield tried it on when he smashed a ground shot that skidded right under the diving Solomon Islands 'keeper from 30m out on the left side where he had taken up a more withdrawn role. 5-0

Viduka thought he had a hat-trick in the 65th when his header after a rebound off the upright was disallowed for him having been in an off-side position.

Archie Thompson was looking very sharp and it was proper when he netted in the 68th minute, scoring a superb goal from an acute angle past the keeper and into the inside of the net on the left side, having controlled a bouncing ball and swivelling to make space wide. 6-0

The floodgates were straining as Thompson was over the crossbar and Bresciano was wide.

The Solomons rallied but were given the last humiliation when Brett Emerton knocked in a fierce speculator from 25m out on the right that the keeper should have but did not hold. 7-0

The winner of this home-and away series will earn the right to face the fifth-placed South American nation in November for the final place at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. Certainly Australia fly out to the South Pacific islands with a fine buffer.

After the game Hiddink was relaxed, as he would be, and asked about the ease of the game within his experience, he said "That was expected, but of course we are happy to win every game. What is important is I like to see some things that we have practised for the big games coming up ... to see that in the game".

"We said we would full press from the start, which we did and then we have to have a little bit of luck when the area is too crowded", said Hiddink. "I think we did well to not let them play and there were quality goals," he added.

He will take the full squad to the challenging environment of the troubled country's capital on a charter flight on Monday morning, but it is hard to see much risk if he experiments at the Lawson Tama Stadium on Tuesday. The game is at 1pm local time (or 12 midday AET).

Hiddink stressed more in the media conference the usefulness of the upcoming friendly game against Jamaica in settling his future choices that this Oceania World Cup game. A sign that the move by Australia to the Asian Confederation in January 2006 is long overdue.

World Cup Qualifying Round, Group play-off 2nd. Leg, Oceanian Zone													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. September 2005, 13.00			Lawson Tama Stadium, Honiara, Solomon Islands									15000	
Solomon Islands..1 v. Australia..2													
half time, Solomon Islands..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Felix Ray Junior					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac		49		
5	DF	George Suri					2	DF	Lucas Neill		46		
17	DF	Gideon Omokirio					7	MF	Brett Emerton	58			
2	DF	Leslie Leo				79	10	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				45*
3	DF	Mahlon Houkarawa					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		75		
18	MF	Henry Samuel Luito'o Fa'arodo Junior	49(pk)				17	MF	Jonathan "Jon" McKain		90+4		
13	MF	George Lui		41	47		19	MF	Jason Culina				
19	MF	Francis Wasi					23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano		62		
16	MF	Stanley Waita				84	9	FW	Mark Viduka				45
11	FW	Commins Menapi		45+2			12	FW	Scott Chipperfield				67
10	FW	Batram Suri				65	14	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	19			
SUBSTITUTES													
20	GK	Francis Aruwafu					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
4	DF	Terry Oiake					4	DF	Michael Thwaite				
7	MF	Alick Maemae					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				
8	MF	Abraham Iniga				65	11	FW	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				67
9	FW	Kidston Billy Olomani					15	FW	Sasho Petrovski				
12	DF	Richard Anisua				79	21	MF	Ahmad Elrich				45
14	MF	Jack Samani				84	22	MF	Luke Wilkshire				45*
Team Coach		Ayrton Andrioli					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Shamsul Maidin (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 1		Fathi Al-Arabati (Jordan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Eisa Ghuloum (United Arab Emirates)											

match report from AAP

The Socceroos booked their four-yearly World Cup date with destiny today, surviving a scare from a 10-man Solomon Islands side for a 2-1 win in their Oceania qualifier.

Australia's hard-fought victory in today's second leg of the qualifier at Lawson Tama Stadium gave it a 9-1 aggregate win to secure a berth in November's World Cup playoff against South American opposition. While Saturday night's 7-0 first leg rout in Sydney meant the Solomons had to score an impossible eight goals to make the tie interesting, today's win in oppressive, humid conditions was much more difficult for the Socceroos.

After Australia had led 1-0 at halftime courtesy of a goal from Archie Thompson, the game came alive early in the second half when Socceroos defender Lucas Neill conceded a penalty after fouling striker Henry Fa'arodo in the box.

The resulting spot-kick by Commins Menapi was saved by Australian keeper Zeljko Kalac but in the ensuing ruckus around the ball Solomons player George Lui was sent off for kicking Kalac. And Singaporean referee Maidin Chamsul didn't stop there, ordering the kick be retaken because Kalac had moved off his line before the initial attempt - much to the annoyance of the Socceroos. Fa'arodo stepped up for the second attempt and made no mistake in levelling the scores to send the 20,000-plus fans in the stands and hillside surrounding the stadium into raptures.

But the Solomons' joy lasted just 10 minutes before Brett Emerton smashed home from close range to put Australia back in control. While Australia didn't manage to add to its scoreline it made several substitutions to allow new coach Guus Hiddink to look at some of his fringe players.

The brave Solomon Islanders pressed hard in the last few minutes for an equaliser but couldn't find a way through Australia's defence, while midfielder Vince Grella was influential in blunting their attacks in a holding role.

Italian-based Grella also created Thompson's goal with a delightful lofted ball for the Melbourne Victory striker to slot home. Hiddink made five changes to the starting team which romped home on Saturday night and tinkered with his formation, favouring a 4-4-2 with Grella and Marco Bresciano anchoring the midfield. The Socceroos now face a two-legged playoff in mid-November against whichever South American team finishes fifth in that region's World Cup group with the winner advancing to the 2006 finals in Germany. At present Uruguay is in fifth place with two rounds remaining while Paraguay, Colombia and Chile are also in the mix to be Australia's opponent.

It was the Socceroos last game in the Oceania Football Confederation after nearly 40 years. Australia joins the Asian Football Confederation from next year.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
9th. October 2005, 19.45			Craven Cottage, London, England									6570	
Jamaica..0 v. Australia..5													
half time, Jamaica..0 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Shawn Sawyers						GK	Zeljko Kalac				
	DF	Damian Stewart				60		DF	Lucas Neill				
	DF	Tyrone Marshall						DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				52
	DF	Claude Davis				46		DF	Michael Thwaite				
	MF	Nicholy Finlayson				52		MF	Scott Chipperfield				
	MF	Ricardo Gardner						MF	Brett Emerton				70
	MF	Robert Scarlett				52*		MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	3			79
	FW	Jermaine Johnson				49		MF	Luke Wilshire				79*
	FW	Omar Daley						MF	Jason Culina				
	FW	Ricardo Fuller				61		FW	Mark Viduka	48			56
	FW	Luton Shelton						FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	29			70*
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Fabian Dawkins				60		MF	Josip Skoko				52
	DF	Jermaine Taylor				46		MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				70
	DF	Desmond Breckenridge				52		MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				79
	FW	Damani Ralph				49		MF	Ahmad Elrich				79*
	DF	Garfield Reid				52*		FW	John Aloisi	58			56
	MF	Jason Morrison				61		FW	Joel Griffiths	85			70*
Team Coach		Wendall Downswell					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mike Riley (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Peter Kirkup (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mike Tingey (England)											

match report from Soccerphile

Australia swept aside Jamaica with ease at Craven Cottage in their final game before their do or die World Cup play-off in November.

How much coach Guus Hiddink, who guided Holland to the 1998 semi-final and South Korea to the same stage two years later will have learnt from this whitewash is a moot point: On the last available date before November and with all the European teams in action, it cannot have been easy to have persuaded an already eliminated country from another continent to assemble in London.

As it turned out Jamaica were not as complete pushovers as the scoreline suggests, showing many moments of skill but they looked on the whole like a side who had been eliminated in the earlier stages of the CONCACAF qualifiers instead of one on the verge of a push for the World Cup Finals.

The Australians did have a friendly fixture with Colombia arranged for mid August in London cancelled after coach Frank Farina's departure at the end of June left the Socceroos leaderless. This had been a curious choice of opponent in the first place given that Colombia could still face Australia in the two-legged play off in a few weeks' time.

When Hiddink persuaded the Australian Football Federation and his daily employers PSV Eindhoven that he could manage the job part-time he at once decided to cancel the friendly on the grounds that it would have given Australia's future opponents a free spying session.

Hiddink also made a decisive switch from the 4-4-2 preferred by Farina to 3-5-2 and on the evidence of Sunday's game it is a system that works with the players he has available. It took Australia less than two minutes to find the net as Parma's Mark Bresciano collected the ball in space twenty yards from goal and curled a perfect shot into the postage stamp beyond Jamaica's Shawn Sawyers.

A shell-shocked Jamaica struggled to cope with the contrasting Australian forward line of Middlesboro's burly Mark Viduka and the pacy Archie Thompson, from Melbourne Victory in the fledgling Australian A-League. Frequently they were joined by the roving 25 year old PSV winger Jason Culina, metamorphosing the Aussie formation to a 3-4-3.

On twenty eight minutes the Australians doubled their lead as Culina led a counter attack down the right wing before whipping in a deep cross that Thompson controlled and slotted past Sawyers.

Jamaica had barely got out of their own half but had hinted at better things with a few attacking forays from Ricardo Gardner and Omar Daley before they came close to scoring after thirty five minutes.

Luton Shelton beat Lucas Neill for pace before firing a shot a yard wide of the diving Milan keeper Zeljko Kalac in the Australian goal.

A minute later Culina should have made it 3-0 when set up by Viduka but shot meekly straight into Sawyers' arms. The last action of the half saw Jamaica's centre forward Ricardo Fuller slalom past three defenders four minutes from time before agonizingly falling over when shaping to shoot.

Only a minute after the restart the Socceroos effectively snuffed out any Jamaican thoughts of rebellion with a third goal.

Archie Thompson found space on the left before crossing to Viduka unmarked in the box. The Middlesboro man looked to have lost the ball to one of the defenders sandwiching him before regaining his footing and poking it into the roof of the net.

Jamaica showed some impressive flashes of individual technique but their lack of organization told as their attacks broke down in the last third of the field time and time again. They also displayed a lack of discipline with a couple of reckless tackles that would have surely have caused referee Mike Riley to reach for his cards in a competitive game.

Just before the hour mark the Reggae Boys found themselves four goals down when a combination between Bresciano and substitute John Aloisi allowed the Alaves striker to nip in and score from close range.

The 6,570 crowd of expats at Craven Cottage on this sunny Sunday lunchtime certainly were enjoying the occasion with a string of Mexican waves and the two sets of fans exchanging songs, the Australian end memorably adapting a Bob Marley anthem into a tribute to Mark Viduka.

Five minutes before the final whistle a Jamaican defensive cock-up allowed Jason Griffiths, on his international debut, to nip in and make it five nil to the Socceroos and complete a satisfactory day's work.

Jason Culina, a perpetual nuisance to Jamaica's back line and a creator of several chances was named man of the match.

With the awesome prospect of the winner takes all play off with the fifth-placed South American nation to come, the Australians can at least sleep soundly after this comprehensive win, achieved with a starting eleven that missed regulars goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, skipper Craig Moore and tyro midfielders Tim Cahill and Harry Kewell.

Beyond these well-known Aussies abroad we can now add new aces in the pack in Bresciano, Culina and Thompson, as well as Basel's underrated left winger Scott Chipperfield and Michael Thwaite, a 22 year old centre back for Nacional Bucuresti in Romania who also debuted against Jamaica.

After the game, Jamaican coach Wendall Downswell accepted the scoreline looked bad but drew hope from it at the same time:

"We were expecting a better performance," he confessed, "and the fact that we conceded that early goal was a major setback for us and just as we came out for the second half we conceded that all important goal but we saw some positive things in patches. We are in a rebuilding process and thinking of 2008."

Meanwhile, his opposite number Guus Hiddink remained level-headed at an apparently flattering result:

"I think we made an entertaining game for ourselves and for the public," he told reporters, "but at the same time the question is whether we forced them to be vulnerable or whether they were not as strong as they can be. It was not the strongest team we have opposed."

When asked by Soccerphile whether the size of the scoreline might frighten their potential November adversaries, Hiddink replied,

"I think in the international game a 5-0 score is a good score but in these games it is more decisive who is not making the little or big errors in defence, midfield or attack."

And summing up his third game in charge, he concluded,

"I am always critical, but overall the attitude was perfect and it was a very good victory."

Australia: Kalac (Milan), Vidmar (Cardiff) (sub Skoko (Wigan) 53), Neill (Blackburn), Thwaite (Nacional Bucuresti), Chipperfield (Basel), Bresciano (Parma) (sub Cahill), Emerton (Blackburn) (sub Grella (Parma) 70), Wilshire (Bristol City) (sub Elrich (Fulham 79), Culina (PSV), Thompson (Melbourne) (sub Griffiths (Neuchatel Xamax) 70), Viduka (Middlesboro) (sub Aloisi (Alaves) 57).

Jamaica: Sawyers, Damien Stewart (sub Fabian Stewart 64), Marshall, Davis, Finlayson (sub Breakenridge 53), Johnson (sub Ralph 50), Gardner, Daley, Scarlett (sub Reid 53), Fuller (sub Morrison 66), Shelton

Goals: Bresciano 2, Thompson 28, Viduka 47, Aloisi 59, Griffiths 85

World Cup Qualifying Round, Oceania - South America play-off, 1st. Leg													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
12th. November 2005, 18.00			Estadio Centenario, Montevideo, Uruguay								55000		
Uruguay..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, Uruguay..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Héctor Fabián Carini Hernández					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
6	DF	Luis Diego López Breijo				64	2	DF	Lucas Neill				
4	DF	Paolo Ronald Montero Iglesias					5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar		72		
3	DF	Octavio Dario Rodriguez Peña	37	90+1			6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
8	DF	Carlos Andrés Diogo Enseñat					3	MF	Scott Chipperfield		32		
5	MF	Pablo Gabriel Garcia Pérez					10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
15	MF	Diego Fernando Pérez Aguado					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
9	MF	Alvaro Alexander Recoba Rivero					19	MF	Jason Culina				
21	FW	Diego Forlán Corazzo				19	7	FW	Brett Emerton				
17	FW	Marcelo Danubio Zalayeta				64*	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				80
18	FW	Richard Javier Morales Aguirre					14	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				52
SUBSTITUTES													
2	DF	Guillermo Daniel Rodriguez				64	18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
7	MF	Marcelo Fabián Sosa Farias					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				
10	FW	Dario Debray Silva Pereira		24		19	8	MF	Josip Skoko				
11	FW	Mario Ignacio Requeiro Pintos					12	DF	Ljubo Milicevic				
12	GK	Mario Sebastián Viera Galain					15	FW	John Aloisi				80
13	FW	Fabián Larry Estoyanoff Poggio				64*	20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
20	MF	Juan Martin Parodi Gonzalez					23	FW	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				52
Team Coach		Jorge Daniel Fossati Lurachi					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Claus Bo Larson (Denmark)											
Assistant Referee 1		Bill Rene Hansen (Denmark)											
Assistant Referee 2		Anders Norrestrand (Denmark)											

match report from Football Federation Australia

The Qantas Socceroos have been defeated 1-0 by Uruguay in Montevideo this morning in the 1st leg play-off for a berth at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. Only a 36th minute goal from Dario Rodriguez separated the teams in an open and attacking match.

Australia, playing an offensive 3-4-3 formation, started brightly dominating large chunks of the first half but they were unable to grab an away goal that may prove to be so valuable at the conclusion of the two match series.

Captain Mark Viduka perhaps coming closest with, firstly a chip to the back post, and then a thumping free-kick from long range which forced Fabian Carini into a flying save early in the match.

Uruguay came into the match incrementally though most of the danger around the Australian goal was caused by set-pieces with balls played into the penalty area by Alvaro Recoba. It was one such ball whipped into the far post that saw the game's only goal following a dubious free kick awarded after a tangle involving Scott Chipperfield and Diego Perez.

Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer was called into action far more in the second half and he didn't put a foot wrong taking a number of dangerous high balls and making a crucial close-range block from Richard Morales with 13 minutes remaining.

Australia's central midfielders Vince Grella and Jason Culina were also outstanding and the later narrowly failed to score with a shot that rocketed past the post late in the match.

"We dominated the first half completely, but we weren't determined enough to finish it off and we got a sloppy moment on a free-kick," Qantas Socceroo coach Guus Hiddink said on SBS TV.

"We played well, but we had to finish it off because we know they are very dangerous on set pieces. They were not in the game, just on set-pieces. In my experience, when you control them you have to finish them off. I think the Uruguayans will defend in Sydney. They know how to defend, that's why I have mixed feelings about the result. When you're so dominant, so controlling the game, then we have to finish it off."

Uruguayan striker Diego Forlan looks likely to miss the match in Sydney after being substituted just 17 minutes into the match. No players will miss the match through suspension despite a total of 13 players across the two teams which started today's encounter being a caution away from a one-match ban.

Australia has never won on South American soil drawing just once and losing on nine occasions in a total of 10 international matches played on the continent.

World Cup Qualifying Round, Oceania - South America play-off, 2nd. Leg													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
16th. November 2005, 20.00			Telstra Stadium, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)								55000		
Australia..1 v. Uruguay..0 after extra time													
half time, Australia..1 v. Uruguay..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Héctor Fabián Carini Hernández				
2	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Diego Alfredo Lugano Morena				
3	DF	Scott Chipperfield					3	DF	Octavio Dario Rodríguez Peña				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar		39			6	DF	Guillermo Daniel Rodríguez		67		
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic		27		31	8	DF	Carlos Andrés Diogo Enseñat		45+1		
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					4	MF	Paolo Ronald Montero Iglesias				81
7	MF	Brett Emerton				110	5	MF	Pablo Gabriel García Pérez		76		
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					7	MF	Gustavo Antonio Varela Rodríguez				
19	MF	Jason Culina		53			9	MF	Álvaro Alexander Recoba Rivero				72
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	35			96	11	FW	Mario Ignacio Regueiro Pintos		44		97
9	FW	Mark Viduka					18	FW	Richard Javier Morales Aguirre		110		
SUBSTITUTES													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					12	GK	Mario Sebastián Viera Galain				
8	MF	Josip Skoko				110	10	FW	Darío Debray Silva Pereira				
10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell		86		31	13	FW	Fabián Larry Estoyanoff Poggio				97
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					14	MF	Marcelo Fabián Sosa Farias				81
12	DF	Ljubo Milicevic					17	FW	Marcelo Danubio Zalayeta				72
14	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					19	MF	Gonzalo de los Santos da Rosa				
15	FW	John Aloisi				96	21	DF	Eduardo Alejandro Lago Correa				
Team Coach		Guus Hiddink					Team Coach		Jorge Daniel Fossati Lurachi				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Luis Medina Cantalejo (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Pedro Medina Hernandez (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 2		Victoriano Giraldez Carrasco (Spain)											
PENALTY SHOOT-OUT													
Australia..4 v. Uruguay..2													
10		Harold "Harry" Kewell	X				3		Octavio Dario Rodríguez Peña	missed			
2		Lucas Neill	X				7		Gustavo Antonio Varela Rodríguez	X			
5		Antony "Tony" Vidmar	X				13		Fabián Larry Estoyanoff Poggio	X			
9		Mark Viduka	missed				17		Marcelo Danubio Zalayeta	missed			
15		John Aloisi	X										

match report from FIFA

For Australia the long wait is over. After 32 years the Socceroos will return to Germany, scene of their one previous FIFA World Cup finals appearance, for next summer's finals after beating Uruguay 4-2 on penalties in front of 83,000 spellbound spectators in Sydney's Telstra Stadium.

Substitute John Aloisi converted the decisive kick after goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer had produced superb saves to deny Dario Rodriguez and Marcelo Zalayeta, as the Socceroos finally savoured success in a play-off after four previous failures. Trailing 1-0 from the first leg, Marco Bresciano had earlier drawn Australia level on aggregate with a 34th-minute goal before Guus Hiddink's side held their nerve in the climactic shoot-out to book their ticket to Germany.

Australia's triumph is another landmark for their Dutch coach Hiddink. Brought on board in the summer, the man who led Korea Republic to the semi-finals of the last FIFA World Cup has produced another act of alchemy, helping Australian football erase the pain of those previous play-off defeats in 1985, 1993, 1997 and 2001.

For the first half-hour of this match, however, it seemed Australia were facing further heartache. The early exchanges were all about Uruguay's little talisman, Alvaro Recoba. Australia needed no introduction to the Inter Milan playmaker whose free-kick had led to Rodriguez's goal in Montevideo. Yet the hosts hardly helped their cause by conceding a series of free-kicks in perfect positions for Recoba to hurt them with his superb left foot.

Recoba provided an early scare with a delivery from distance which struck the turf in front of Schwarzer, seemingly catching the keeper by surprise as the ball bounced away off his midriff. Moments later another ball from Recoba had Scott Chipperfield straining to head behind as Carlos Diogo prepared to pounce at the far post.

Uruguay full-back Diego Lugano flashed a header just past the far post after getting his head to Recoba's corner in the 12th minute and with the Socceroos struggling to find their composure, Recoba gave them an even greater scare in the 20th minute. From Fabian Carini's goal-kick, Richard Morales flicked the ball on to Recoba and he skipped away from Tony Vidmar and, with just Schwarzer to beat, opted to strike early and flashed a shot wide of the near post.

With so much at stake, tensions were running high. Paolo Montero shoved a hand into Tim Cahill's face while Tony Popovic earned a caution for catching Recoba with a swinging arm in the 27th minute. That was the big defender's final contribution of note as Hiddink replaced him with Harry Kewell on the half-hour.

Up to that point, Australia's only threat on Carini's goal had come from Jason Culina whose low drive drew a fingertip save from the keeper. However, within four minutes of Kewell's arrival, they were ahead. Cahill and

Mark Viduka combined to set up Kewell in the penalty box. The Liverpool winger swung a boot and miskicked but happily for the Socceroos the ball rolled on to Bresciano who lashed it high into the net. With the confidence of a goal, Australia started the second half more purposefully than they had the first. Bresciano's free-kick into the box produced panic in the Uruguay defence but Chipperfield could only direct his far-post header back across goal. However, Morales then spurned a glorious opportunity at the other end. Rising unopposed to meet Recoba's corner, the big Uruguay striker - a goalscoring hero against the Socceroos in 2001 - headed the ball into the ground and up over the crossbar.

The hosts were now enjoying the control Uruguay had in the first half-hour, with Kewell's influence a factor. Cahill volleyed narrowly wide from a Kewell cross, then Bresciano shot over from Viduka's knockdown. Recoba, such a threat in the first period, had become a peripheral figure and made way for Zalayeta in the 72nd minute. Uruguay then suffered the loss of captain Montero to an apparent hamstring injury as Australia kept pushing for the decisive second goal.

Cahill sent a diving header wide and Carini kept out Kewell's near-post strike, before Chipperfield, with a clear sight of goal, delayed too long before shooting following a Bresciano corner. Extra time arrived, adding a fresh layer of tension, and Uruguay suddenly found a second wind. There were Australian hearts in mouths on more than one occasion.

Gustavo Rodriguez headed over from a corner, then, with 116 minutes on the clock, Morales sent a shot a whisker wide of the far post after latching on to Zalayeta's flick-on. Zalayeta then himself headed into Schwarzer's arms but for the first time, the destiny of a FIFA World Cup finals place would be decided by penalties.

Australia full-back Lucas Neill hailed Mark Schwarzer after the goalkeeper's heroics in the penalty shoot-out victory which secured a place at next year's FIFA World Cup in Germany.

Trailing 1-0 from the first leg in Montevideo, Australia levelled the play-off on aggregate through Marco Bresciano's first-half strike in a fiery match dominated by the hosts at Sydney's Telstra Stadium. Although Mark Viduka missed a spot-kick, the striker's Middlesbrough team-mate Schwarzer saved from Marcelo Zalayeta and Dario Rodriguez before John Aloisi tucked away Australia's fifth penalty to secure a famous win.

"He wasn't the only hero, everyone involved in the team was brilliant," said Neill, who himself scored in the shoot-out. "Credit goes to everyone but Mark will take the plaudits and deservedly so."

Schwarzer said: "It's a huge wave of relief for everyone. When the game progressed, we felt we had a good opportunity. They took off Recoba, and (Paolo) Montero through injury, so the sense of belief just mounted. Of the penalty shoot-out, he added: "It was surreal, I stood there and felt with every kick I knew where to go."

After a wait of 32 years since their only appearance at football's biggest tournament, Australia held on in front of 82,698 fans and took the game to penalties. Among the crowd was Hollywood actor John Travolta, who celebrated with the Socceroos in the changing room after the dramatic finale. "Not only have we made the nation proud, we had John Travolta in the changing room," Neill added. "It's an amazing night and that capped it off."

Australia coach Guus Hiddink, who is also in charge of Dutch side PSV Eindhoven, now has the opportunity to enhance his FIFA World Cup pedigree after taking Korea Republic to the semi-finals in 2002. In a repeat of the play-off four years ago, which Uruguay won comfortably, the enterprise of Merseyside-based duo Tim Cahill and Harry Kewell gave Australia the upper hand.

Hiddink's side opened the scoring when Bresciano forced the ball home ten minutes from the interval. Cahill initiated the goal with a sharp turn before heading towards the penalty area and slipping the ball to Viduka.

The big striker instinctively flicked towards Kewell who missed his shot before the ball fell invitingly for Bresciano to lash into the top corner.

The goal vindicated Hiddink's decision to bring on Kewell for centre-back Tony Popovic, who had been cautioned shortly before for elbowing Uruguayan playmaker Alvaro Recoba.

"They made it very hard for us," Neill said. "The 1-0 in the first leg was a good result and we put ourselves in a good position. We had the composure to keep the pressure on, it went to the wire and was nerve-racking but everyone got their value for money. Overall we've played fantastically well. There's a fantastic feeling in the changing room."

Uruguay coach Jorge Fossati, who was missing striker Diego Forlan and veteran defender Diego Lopez, said afterwards: "I feel great pain. I am at the lowest moment of my sporting life today. I am sorry to the Uruguayan public for failing at the last hurdle. I am at peace with myself. The players gave it their all. All of my players tonight fought like lions till the end."

Both the team and coaching staff were inconsolable after the game. The players, who had flown thousands of miles in economy class, battled to the very end only to see their dreams go up in smoke in the dreaded penalty shootout. Uruguay's coach Jorge Fossati summed up the mood of despondency afterwards with brutal honesty: "This is the lowest point in my sporting life. As the person who calls the shots both technically and tactically, the responsibility lies with me."

I feel sorry for the people of Uruguay, with us falling like this at the last hurdle, but I'm at peace with myself. The players gave it their all and fought like lions for the cause, the coach added. Meanwhile back in his homeland, questions were being asked about his decision to take off Alvaro Recoba, considered by many as the team's most influential player.

It was not only the coach who agreed to face the media in Sydney. Captain Paolo Montero, who limped off injured, also had something important to say: "I'm retiring from the national team," the veteran defender told reporters, calling the result an "injustice". "This group of players deserve to be at the World Cup finals," he added. It was a sad end for the former Serie A star, whose long international career included an appearance at Korea/Japan 2002.

As was to be expected, the streets of Montevideo were awash with tears of disappointment in the aftermath of the result. The print media caught the mood of the nation with dramatic headlines like "From Dream To Nightmare", "Celeste in Mourning" and "A slap in the face for the Celeste".

El Pais did not hold back either, stating bluntly that the Celeste had "failed". The paper then went on to criticise Fossati's side for its lack of forcefulness, saying: "One goal would have been enough, but they couldn't find the net, not even from the spot." El Observador took a similar line, saying: "The dream slipped away with each chance missed", a clear reference to Uruguay's misfiring forwards. "Our elimination was neither miraculous nor shocking; the players neither heroes nor villains. There were no extremes in this case. Uruguay's performance wasn't shameful or extraordinary, just mediocre, although it hurts just the same," the paper added.

For its part, the Ultimas Noticias led with "The Dream is Over", adding that it had been "more of an illusion than a dream". It also reminded its readers that Uruguay would be the only former champion missing from Germany.

Finally, all the dailies gave prominence to Fossati's statement on the repercussions of this latest setback for the team: "Uruguay needs to start by taking a long hard look at itself so as to draw conclusions about what went wrong," the coach was quoted as saying.

2006

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round														
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
22nd. February 2006,			National Stadium, Riffa, Bahrain									2500		
Bahrain..1 v. Australia..3														
half time, Bahrain..1 v. Australia..0														
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	
START LIST														
1	GK	Ali Hassaan Al-Thani					12	GK	Ante Covic					
2	DF	Mohamed Hasain Mohamed Hasain Bahzad					16	DF	Michael Thwaite				46	
3	DF	Abdulla Rahman Al-Marzooqi			86		26	DF	Michael Beauchamp					
14	DF	Salman Isa Ghuloom					36	DF	Jonathan McKain					
29	DF	Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Hubail					35	MF	Jade North					
7	MF	Sayed Mahmood Jalal Al-Wadaei		31			31	MF	Alvin Ceccoli					
8	MF	Rashed Rahman Saif Al-Dossari				77	20	MF	Luke Wilkshire		45			
10	MF	Mohamed Ahmed Salmeen (c)					8	MF	Josip Skoko (c)	79				
16	MF	Sayed Mohamed Adnan Husain					21	FW	Ahmad Elrich	88(pk)				
18	MF	Hussain Habib				62	22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson	53				
9	FW	Husain Ali Ahmed Ahmed Abdulla	36				27	FW	Scott McDonald				82	
SUBSTITUTES														
27	MF	Ali Aamer Hassan Ali Aamer Musaifer				77	25	FW	Brett Holman		73		46	
30	FW	A'ala Ahmed Mohamed Hubail				62	30	FW	David Carney				82	
28	MF	Ismail Hassan Abdul-Latif					28	FW	Alex Brosque					
22	GK	Abdul Rahman Ahmed					41	MF	Spase Dilevski					
25	MF	Faouzi Mubarak Aaish					40	GK	Michael Petkovic					
24	GK	Hamad Al-Anezi					38	DF	Michael Valkanis					
12	FW	Mohamed Juma Ghanem					43	MF	Carl Valeri					
							42	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Ward					
Team Coach		Luka Peruzovic					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink					
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti					
Referee		Subkhiddin Mohd Salleh (Malaysia)												
Assistant Referee 1		Mohamed Saeed (Maldives)												
Assistant Referee 2		Nasaruddin Ishak (Malaysia)												

Ismail Hassan Abdul-Latif is also shown as Ismaeel Hasan

match report from FFA

A magnificent second half performance by the Qantas Socceroos has earned them a 3-1 win over Bahrain and dream start to their qualifying campaign for the 2007 Asian Cup.

One-nil down at half-time, a tactical change by Graham Arnold and Johan Neeskens proved to be the catalyst for the turnaround, with Archie Thompson, Josip Skoko and Ahmed Elrich scoring the goals to earn a valuable three points.

Arnold was a very satisfied man after the game and paid a huge compliment to the group of players for their performance.

"It's very satisfying, coming away to Bahrain and getting the win," said Arnold. "They (Bahrain) were up for it tonight and were very physical but (Josip) Skoko really controlled the game in the second half and overall I'm very happy."

After a disappointed first half, which saw Australia continually lose possession in midfield and put little pressure on the Bahrain defence, the change seemed to lift the players and find the more traditional 4-4-2 system to their liking.

After almost going 2-0 down straight after the break when first half goal scorer Hussein Ali struck the post, it was Thompson who got Australia back on level terms in the 54th minute.

Thompson, who only was called into the squad on Saturday after it became apparent he would not be required for PSV in the Champions League, met a beautifully weighted free kick by Skoko and headed powerfully home inside the near post.

By this stage Australia was dominating the midfield with Skoko now able to get his foot on the ball and use it effectively and bring the wide players into action, while Elrich and Thompson were able to start running at players and create some confusion in the Bahrain defence.

The killer goal came in the 79th minute and finished beautifully by Skoko from just outside the edge of the area. Following a mazy run by Thompson the ball fell nicely for Skoko who curled his first time shot into the top corner. It was no more than the skipper for the night deserved, after his dominant second half performance.

From there Australia could have scored another two or three goals, with debutant Scott McDonald missing two good opportunities within the space of a minute.

The knockout punch came with just minutes remaining, when Elrich was felled by Abdullah Marzooq with an elbow as he went for a rebound in the penalty box. The Malaysian referee had no hesitation in awarding the big Bahraini defender a straight red card and Australia a penalty kick.

Elrich scored with his first penalty kick, but was ordered to retake it for encroachment, but he kept his nerve and stroked home his second attempt to out Australia up 3-1.

Bahrain almost pulled a goal back in injury time when defender Adnan hit the crossbar with a header, but there was no denying Australia its first win, competing as an official member of the AFC.

However it didn't appear it would go that way after an insipid first half performance, which Arnold put down to nerves.

"The first half, I think the players were very nervous and it became scrappy," said Arnold. "We got them in at half time and told them to calm down and be patient and that things would turn around."

"We changed it around a little at half time and it obviously paid off."

The first half was a real contrast to the second half with Australia playing too many long balls in the first half which played into the hands (or heads) of the tall Bahraini defenders.

But in saying that, apart from the goal scored in the 35th minute, most shots from Bahrain were from long range.

Bahrain's goal came when a neat one-two saw captain Salman Isa get in behind Jade North on the left and his cross found Ali at the near post who tucked his shot across Ante Covic and inside the far post.

Isa could have a second goal for Bahrain with the last kick of the first half when he was allowed space on the edge of the box, but he shot straight at Covic, who diverted it away from goal.

Australia did not have one meaningful shot at goal in the first half, but Holman's introduction for his first game, gave the team more balance and it settled the team down.

When asked for a standout performer, Arnold praised Central Coast Mariners defender Michael Beauchamp, saying "Michael Beauchamp was outstanding tonight and has put himself right into calculations (for World Cup selection)".

Archie Thompson was also very pleased to get back with the national team and add another goal to his ever-increasing tally.

"I'm delighted with the win. At 1-0 down we knew it would be difficult, but we came back in the second half and thoroughly deserved the win.

"Everyone was nervous in the first half, because not only was it our first game in the Asian Cup, but World Cup places were up for grabs. Our second half performance though, proved we are a good side and that we have the players that can compete at this level."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
25th. May 2006, 19.00			Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Victoria									95103	
Australia..1 v. Greece..0													
half time, Australia..1 v. Greece..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					1	GK	Antonios Nikopolidis				
2	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Georgios Seitaridis				
3	DF	Craig Moore					5	DF	Traianos Dellas				
5	MF	Jason Culina					14	DF	Panagiotis Fyssas				78
7	MF	Brett Emerton					25	DF	Sotirios Kyrgiakos				46**
8	MF	Josip Skoko	16			60	6	MF	Angelos Basinas				46
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					8	MF	Stylianios Giannkopoylos				46*
14	MF	Scott Chipperfield				49	10	MF	Georgios Karagounis				84
21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				73	21	MF	Konstantinos Katsouranis				
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					9	FW	Angelos Charisteas				
9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				61	27	FW	Georgios Samaras				46***
SUBSTITUTES													
20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				60	22	FW	Dimitrios Salpigidis				46
17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				61	7	MF	Theodoros Zagorakis				46*
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				49	17	FW	Theofanis Gegas				84
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				73	20	MF	Ioannis Amanatidis				78
12	GK	Ante Covic					29	MF	Panagiotis Lagos				46**
15	FW	John Aloisi					32	DF	Georgios Anatolakis				46***
16	DF	Michael Beauchamp					4	DF	Georgios Alexopoulos				
19	FW	Joshua Kennedy					11	FW	Dimtrios Papadopoulos				
22	DF	Mark Milligan					12	GK	Stefanos Kotsolis				
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					13	GK	Michail Sifakis				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					15	FW	Zisis Vryzas				
10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell					16	MF	Pantelis Kafes				
							18	DF	Ioannis Goumas				
							19	DF	Michail Kapsis				
							23	MF	Vasilios Lakis				
							24	DF	Loukas Vyntra				
							26	FW	Evangelos Mantzios				
							28	DF	Paraskevas Antzas				
							30	MF	Tziolis Alexandros				
							31	MF	Filippos Darlas				
Team Coach		Guus Hiddink					Team Coach		Otto Rehhagel				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Mike Riley (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Jim Ouliaris (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Matthew Cream (Australia)											

match report from Alan Clark

A wonder strike by Josip Skoko who sent a volley into the top left corner of Antonios Nikopolidis' goal just before the quarter-hour was enough to give Australia a 1-0 win against reigning European Champions Greece at the MCG on Thursday evening. The goal sent the capacity 95,000 crowd into rapture, giving heart to those who look forward with optimism to Australia's forthcoming World Cup adventure.

This Socceroo side was without Harry Kewell and Tim Cahill, both absent through injury, who surely would be part of coach Guus Hiddink's preferred starting eleven. John Aloisi also stood out this match as a precaution. Into the team came Mile Sterjovski and Skoko who had combined effectively for the goal, giving Hiddink just the sort of selection problem coaches enjoy.

Marco Bresciano played a key part in the goal - which came from his corner - as well as throughout the match. As a Melbourne-raised boy, he'd have relished his chance to play at Melbourne's iconic sporting venue in front of a record attendance since the ground's re-configuration. Given that this was an all-seater and ticketed attendance, it's likely the attendance will not be bettered, even by sports which are more usually played there.

Captain Mark Viduka has also been reported to enjoy his returns to his old hometown, and the games at the 'G in particular. For these two overseas-based footballers, Bresciano in Italy and Viduka in England, together with Geelong-raised Skoko now playing his trade in England, coming home for the national team's farewell game in Melbourne was something to savour. And it showed.

Rarely did Greece threaten during the match such was Australia's tight control of the contest. And once Skoko had scored, it wasn't possible for Greece to rely on the tactic that had got it European silverware just two short years ago. During that tournament, Greece had eked out one-nil victories against France, the Czech Republic, and Portugal in the elimination phase by compressing the match and relying on a single effective attack. This time, Greece would have to wrest the game from its opponent's grasp. It failed. This was not just because it couldn't summon up the resources to do so, but because time and space on the ball was denied by the Australians' hard work.

There was much to play for if you were a Socceroo. Catching Guss' eye in one of the three lead-up games might make for a starting position in Australia's first World Cup game against Japan just over a fortnight later.

For many - Skoko included - it might mean an ability to find a club elsewhere more suited to his type of footballing finesse and technique than a battling one in England's blood-and-thunder competition. Out of contract Stan Lazaridis who was brought on as a substitute by Hiddink late in the game and who showed good touches might also be of the view that a good World Cup would extend a career in the professional leagues of Europe, even though his English club was relegated.

Goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac had an opportunity to shine after so long being denied as preferred goalkeeper by Mark Schwarzer. Kalac had a nervy start, and little otherwise to do such was the Greeks' lack of purpose in front of goal. He may not have done enough to oust Schwarzer.

Defence has always been Australia's strong point, even when there were fewer riches up front than at present. The return of Craig Moore added steel cables. Lucas Neill on the left, and Brett Emerton on the right were both solid at the back as well as providing good wide play when the Socceroos were in possession. Vince Grella provided cover and energy as a defensive midfielder. There is much to be confident about when considering the defence.

Skoko, Bresciano, and Jason Culina made an effective engine room, Scott Chipperfield and Sterjovski provided the wider attacking options, with Viduka as an orthodox back-to-goal target man setting up his forward-pressing midfielders. These are exciting and optimistic times to be an Australia fan.

Surprisingly, the pitch looked to have been made much narrower than the venue and the game's laws allow. Another five yards each side could have been added. Perhaps this was part of Hiddink's preparation - make time and space even more constricted, and requiring sharper responses and quicker wide-play from his squad. It was effective if it was. The ball was constantly in motion, into and from Grella, Culina, and Bresciano constantly seeking the opening. The unforgiving nature of the overly-hard MCG playing surface meant underfoot conditions were not ideal for such speed, and such change of movement, but Australia seemed better able to cope with this than the visitors. And as the game progressed, save for a fifteen minute burst early in the second half when Greece seemed to lift, it was a match where only one side was likely to win.

As the Australia players went around the vast stadium on a lap-of-honour after the final whistle to the delight of the huge crowd, even those in blue and white nominally supporting Greece who would have been disappointed at their heroes' poor showing, paid tribute to the team which will carry their hopes as well as the hopes of those clad in green and gold for whom there are fewer conflicts of identity.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
2nd. June 2006,			Wesselopark, Kloetinge, Netherlands									3500	
V.V.Kloetinge..1 v. Australia..8													
half time, V.V.Kloetinge..0 v. Australia..3													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Jaco van der Schee				46		GK	Ante Covic				
	DF	André Siereveld				46*		DF	Mark Milligan				
	DF	Erwin van der Woerd						DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				46*
	DF	Giovanni Siereveld						DF	Michael Beauchamp				
	DF	Benjamin Verwest				46**		MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
	MF	Ronald Zuidwegt				50		MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	17			46
	MF	Ferry Alfons				46***		MF	Josip Skoko				
	MF	Corné Schilperoort						MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell	27, 75			
	MF	Niels Kole						FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				78
	FW	Daan Esser						FW	Joshua Kennedy	59, 70, 72			
	FW	Regilio Pinas	82					FW	John Aloisi	28,74			
SUBSTITUTES													
	GK	Merlijn Swennen				46		DF	Neil Kilkenney				46*
	DF	Rien de Bruine				46*, 85		MF	Kaz Patafta				78
	DF	André Siereveld				85		MF	Kristian Sarkies				46
	DF	David den Hollander				46**							
	MF	Ronald Zwager				50							
	MF	Emiel Dorst				46***							
Team Coach		Diederik Hiensch					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Bart Wattle											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report copied from Provinciale Zeeuwse Courant, 3/6/2006

<http://www.pzc.nl/sport/zeeland/article391645.ece>

De een pronkte met zijn veroverde shirt, een ander bejubelde zijn doelpunt en een derde telde de talrijke zegeningen voor de vereniging. Kloetinge verloor vrijdagavond weliswaar ruim van Australië (1-8), maar de Bevelandse voetbalclub kende eigenlijk alleen winnaars.

"Ik heb in ieder geval een mooi verhaal om later aan mijn kleinkinderen te vertellen", glimlachte Kloetinges doelpuntenmaker Regilio Pinas na de wedstrijd op het met 3500 toeschouwers gevulde Wesselopark.

Scoren tegen Australië, dat is hartstikke leuk. Echt onvergetelijk." Corné Schilperoort liep al even stralend over het in opvallend goede staat verkerende hoofdveld van Kloetinge, dat normaal de gelijkenis met een steppe moeiteloos doorstaat. De eindcijfers waren de middenvelder van de hoofdklasser om het even. Hij was immers in zijn missie geslaagd, had de buit waar hij de hele dag al op aasde. "Deze wilde ik per se hebben", zei Schilperoort over het bezwete Australië-shirt met rugnummer tien, dat hij na het laatste fluitsignaal van scheidsrechter Bart Wattel razendsnel veroverde én aantrok. "Harry Kewell, dat vind ik een geweldige voetballer.

Ik heb direct na de aftrap al geregeld dat ik mijn shirt met hem mocht ruilen. Het was, zeg maar, mijn eerste goede actie van de wedstrijd." "Het was een perfecte avond", sprak Kloetinge-voorzitter Jan van der Weele, terwijl hij verbaasd en geamuseerd tegelijk het perspandemonium rond Australië-coach Guus Hiddink gadesloeg. "We hebben geen wanklank gehoord. Ja, op een gegeven moment was een bepaalde soort drank op.

Nou, als dat je grootste probleem is... Of we er financieel iets aan over houden? Jazeker. Als dat niet zo was, hadden we het slecht gedaan." Dat deed de club volgens de preses dus niet. Net zomin als de Kloetinge-spelers een modderfiguur sloegen. Sterker, de ploeg van trainer Diederik Hiensch combineerde voor de pauze naar hartelust en kwam zelfs vier keer in scoringspositie. "Goh, ik had er wel eentje in mogen schieten", stelde aanvaller Daan Esser, die het meest kansrijk was. "Maar ja, er staat natuurlijk ook nog een keeper. En eerlijk gezegd schrok ik er soms ook wel van dat ik tegen een team als Australië een kans kreeg."

Mede daarom konden de Soccerroos, die bij lange niet in de sterkst denkbare opstelling aantraden en in de tweede helft zelfs drie jeugdspelers lieten opdraven, na 17 minuten op voorsprong komen. Tim Cahill knikte raak na een vrije trap van Josip Skoko: 0-1. Harry Kewell verdubbelde de marge tien minuten later en zestig seconden na die treffer kopte John Aloisi de ruststand achter doelman Jaco van der Schee: 0-3.

"We boden in de eerste helft opvallend goed tegenstand", sprak Kloetinge-verdediger Erwin van der Woerd verheugd. "Al is het prachtig om te zien hoe makkelijk iemand als Harry Kewell voetbalt, hoor. En hij speelde volgens mij nog op slechts vijftig procent ook. Na rust ging het licht bij ons langzaam uit, het verschil in conditie en kwaliteit begon zich te wreken. Maar wat maakt het uit? Het was gewoon een onvergetelijke ervaring."

Ook de vele wisselingen kwamen het spel van Kloetinge niet ten goede, al duurde het nog bijna een kwartier voordat Josh Kennedy daar munt uit sloeg. De spits van Australië legde Van der Woerd met een

lichaamsschijnbeweging in de luren en passeerde doelman Merlijn Swennen koeltjes: 0-4.

Kennedy was ook verantwoordelijk voor de 0-5 (schitterend achter het standbeen langs) en 0-6 (na een heel verre ingooi van Mark Milligan). John Aloisi en Harry Kewell brachten de stand op 0-8, voordat Regilio Pinas acht minuten voor tijd zijn moment van glorie beleefde: 1-8.

"Het was prima zo", zei Kloetinge-trainer Diederik Hiensch. "Ik heb de spelers vooraf gezegd dat ze zich niet alleen moesten bekommeren om het voorkomen van doelpunten, maar ook moesten proberen zelf te voetballen. Dat is heel behoorlijk gelukt." Dus was de oefenmeester een tevreden mens. Hoewel? Hiensch bekende zo nu en dan wel degelijk gefrustreerd te hebben toegekeken. Het hele afgelopen seizoen moest zijn ploeg de thuisduels immers afwerken op een hemeltergend slecht veld, maar voor het duel met Australië waren kosten noch moeite gespaard om er een biljartfak van te maken. "Het kan dus kennelijk wel", zei Hiensch verongelijkt. „Mocht het veld komend seizoen op een gegeven moment weer in bedroevende staat verkeren, dan zal ik de clubleiding hier eens aan herinneren."

Kloetinge-Australië 1-8 (0-3). 17. Tim Cahill 0-1, 27. Harry Kewell 0-2, 28. John Aloisi 0-3, 59. Josh Kennedy 0-4, 70. Josh Kennedy 0-5, 72. Josh Kennedy 0-6, 74. John Aloisi 0-7, 75. Harry Kewell 0-8, 82.

Regilio Pinas 1-8. Scheidsrechter: Bart Wattel (Serooskerke). Aantal toeschouwers: 3500.

Kloetinge: Jaco van der Schree (46. Merlijn Swennen); André Sierenveld (46. Rien de Bruine, 85. André Sierenveld), Erwin van der Woerd, Giovanni Sierenveld, Benjamin Verwest (46. David den Hollander);

Ronald Zuidwegt (50. Ronald Zwager), Ferry Alfons (46. Emiel Dorst), Corné Schilperoort, Niels Kole, Daan Esser, Regilio Pinas.

Australië: Ante Covic; Mark Milligan, Tony Popovic (46. Neil Kilkenny), Michael Beauchamp, Stan Lazaridis; Archie Thompson (78. Kaz Patafta), Tim Cahill (46. Kristian Sarkies), Josip Skoko, Harry Kewell; Josh Kennedy, John Aloisi.

A loose translation is:-

One flaunted his souvenir shirt, another celebrated his goal and a third counted the many blessings for the association. Kloetinge lost Friday, well beaten by Australia (1-8), but the Beveland football club were really the only winners.

"I have at least a good story to tell my grandchildren," smiled Kloetinges scorer Regilio Pinas after the match, where 3500 spectators filled Wesselopark. "Scoring against Australia, was great fun. Truly memorable."

Corné Schilperoort was beaming about the remarkably good condition of the main ground of Kloetinge, which normally resembles a field. His final figures were of the current midfielder of the league. He was indeed successful in his mission, and had the prize which he sought all day. "I really wanted this," said Schilperoort about the sweaty Australian-shirt with the number ten, such that after the final whistle from referee Bart Wattel he rapidly captured and claimed it. "Harry Kewell, who I think is a great footballer, had already agreed immediately after kickoff that I could swap my shirt with him. It was, like, my first good action of the game."

It was a perfect evening, said Kloetinge President Jan van der Wee, whilst he was amazed and amused at the same time of the press pandemonium around Australian coach Guus Hiddink. "We have not heard of any discord. Yes, at one point there was something about a certain kind of drink. Well, if that's your biggest problem ... Whether we are keeping anything about finance? Sure. We would have done poorly if it wasn't so. "

According to the president, the club did not do that.

The Kloetinge players cut a sorry figure. Indeed, they combined with the team coach Diederik Hiensch, to break your heart's content even though they were in a scoring position four times. "Gee, I did get in one shot," said Daan Esser, who was the most promising attacker. "But yes, there is also a keeper. And frankly it shocked me that I am up against a team like Australia with a chance." This is partly why the Socceroos, who took the field with by no means the strongest conceivable line-up, and even in the second half substituted with three youth players, could get ahead after 17 minutes. Tim Cahill nodded in after a free kick by Josip Skoko: 0-1 Harry Kewell doubled the margin ten minutes later and sixty seconds after that John Aloisi headed past a static goalkeeper Jaco van der Schree: 0-3.

We provided remarkably good opposition in the first half, said a pleased Kloetinge defender Erwin van der Woerd. "Although it is wonderful to see how easily someone like Harry Kewell plays football. And he also played with me at just fifty percent. After the break the light slowly faded, the difference in conditions and quality began to tell. But what does it matter? It was just an unforgettable experience."

The game of Kloetinge was not good after too many changes, though it took nearly a quarter of an hour before Josh Kennedy scored. The spearhead of Australia beat Van der Woerd with a body feint and coolly passed goalkeeper Merlin Swennen: 0-4.

Kennedy was also responsible for the 0-5 (brilliantly behind the supporting leg) and 0-6 (after a very long throw from Mark Milligan). John Aloisi and Harry Kewell took the score to 0-8, before Regilio Pinas eight minutes from time experienced his moment of glory: 1-8.

It was just fine, said Diederik Hiensch the Kloetinge trainer. "I told the players beforehand that they not only had to worry about preventing goals, but also had to try to play football themselves. That was pretty successful."

So the coach was a happy man. Although? It is known that Hiensch occasionally watched in frustration. For the whole of last season his team's home matches were played on an appallingly bad pitch, but for the duel with Australia no effort had been spared to make a billiard table out of it. "So it can be done," said an aggrieved Hiensch. "If the field next season is at some point again in deplorable condition, I will remind the club at once."

Kloetinge-Australia 1-8 (0-3). 17. Tim Cahill 0-1, 27. Harry Kewell 0-2, 28. John Aloisi 0-3, 59. Josh Kennedy 0-4, 70. Josh Kennedy 0-5, 72. Josh Kennedy 0-6, 74. John Aloisi 0-7, 75. Harry Kewell 0-8, 82. Regilio Pinas 1-8.

Referee: Bart Wattel (Serooskerke). Number of spectators: 3500.

Kloetinge: Jaco van der Schree (46. Merlijn Swennen); André Sierenveld (46. Rien de Bruine, 85. André Sierenveld), Erwin van der Woerd, Giovanni Sierenveld, Benjamin Verwest (46. David den Hollander);

Ronald Zuidwegt (50. Ronald Zwager), Ferry Alfons (46. Emiel Dorst), Corné Schilperoort, Niels Kole, Daan Esser, Regilio Pinas.

Australia: Ante Covic, Mark Milligan, Tony Popovic (46. Neil Kilkenny), Michael Beauchamp, Stan Lazaridis, Archie Thompson (78. Kaz Patafta), Tim Cahill (46. Kristian Sarkies), Josip Skoko, Harry Kewell, Josh Kennedy, John Aloisi.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature	Attendance		
4th. June 2006, 11.00			De Kuip Stadium, Rotterdam, Netherlands								46000		
Netherlands..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Netherlands..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Edwin van der Sar					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
4	DF	Joris Mathijsen					2	DF	Lucas Neill				
5	DF	Giovanni van Bronckhorst				64	3	DF	Craig Moore				
12	DF	Jan Kromkamp				46	5	MF	Jason Cullina				
13	DF	Andre Ooijer					7	MF	Brett Emerton				
8	MF	Phillip Cocu				36	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		78		
18	MF	Mark van Bommel					14	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
20	MF	Wesley Sneijder				50	20	MF	Luke Wilkshire		58	61	
9	FW	Ruud van Nistelrooy	10				21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				52
11	FW	Arjen Robben					23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				67
17	FW	Robin van Persie					9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				65
SUBSTITUTES													
7	FW	Dirk Kuyt				64	15	FW	John Aloisi				65
16	MF	Hedwiges Maduro				36	4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	55			52
14	DF	John Heitinga				46	17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				67
6	MF	Denny Landzaat				50	16	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
22	GK	Henk Timmer					12	GK	Ante Covic				
23	GK	Maarten Stekelenburg					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
3	DF	Khalid Boulahrouz					19	FW	Joshua Kennedy				
15	DF	Tim de Cler					11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
19	FW	Jan Vennegoor of Hesselink					22	DF	Mark Milligan				
21	FW	Ryan Babel					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
							8	MF	Josip Skoko				
Team Coach		Marco van Basten					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mike Dean (England)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from the FFA

Mark Schwarzer went a long way to securing the No.1 goalkeeper's jersey for Australia's first game of the World Cup Finals against Japan, with a commanding performance in the 1-1 draw with The Netherlands at the De Kuip Stadium in Rotterdam.

Schwarzer made a string of outstanding saves in the game to frustrate the Dutch and their passionate fans, especially after Australia was reduced to ten-men following Luke Wilkshire's dismissal with a half an hour to go in the match. Schwarzer though was not the only hero, with every player contributing to the gutsy draw.

The Netherlands virtually camped themselves in Australia's half after Wilkshire's dismissal for a second yellow card, following a tackle from behind on Giovanni van Bronckhorst. However in typical Aussie fashion, the boys dug deep and held on for a deserved draw.

While Schwarzer's performance was the highlight performance for Australia, the other talking point was Australia's equalising goal, which had a few twists and turns. Tim Cahill scored the goal, just minutes after coming as a substitute for Mile Sterjovski, but it is the lead up that will also create some storylines in particular for captain Mark Viduka.

Viduka was rightly awarded a penalty after being held back by his Dutch marker after a neat Wilkshire through ball, although Viduka still managed to get a shot away that hit the top of the bar. After that missed Viduka stepped up to take the spot kick himself, but after a fairly lengthy delay, saw his shot hit the underside of the bar. The ball bounced down and hit Dutch keeper Edwin van der Sar; it then hit the post and came back out, bouncing down beautifully for Cahill, who lashed it home.

The Dutch had taken lead after just 10 minutes; Ruud Nistelrooy pouncing after Schwarzer had made a good stop to deny an Ooijer shot.

Australia's first chance came in the 21st minute, with Viduka unable to connect well with a header with Lucas Neill picking up the ball and crossing back to Jason Culina, whose header was wide of goal.

With Robben and van Persie looking dangerous on the flanks, the Dutch were a constant threat, but Australia kept resisting and gradually was able to get itself into the game.

The Dutch thought they had good claims of a penalty when a long through ball hit Grella's arm, but the best they got from it was a corner.

The 34th minute saw Schwarzer twice called into action, firstly pushing van Bommel's acute angled shot away for a corner and then denying Wesley Sneijder a goal with a superb full length finger-tip save.

Australia should have equalised in the 41st minute, when Scott Chipperfield was finally able to get down the left flank and put over the perfect cross for Viduka, whose header from 6 yards out was saved by van der Sar.

Ruud van Nistelrooy should have made Australia pay for that miss a minute later when he was also presented with a great opportunity, but headed wide of the post.

The Dutch came out firing at the start of the second half and saw Schwarzer in the thick of the action again, somehow keeping out a close range effort from one of three Dutch players in the vicinity of the ball.

After five minutes, coach Guus Hiddink decided it was time to unleash Tim Cahill and it proved a master-stroke as he was on hand to smash the equaliser after Viduka's penalty miss.

Wilkshire given red after tackle near the corner flag on van Bronckhorst, although referee Mike Dean showed a yellow card then a red, but it was his first yellow.

Robben should have had Dutch back in front two minutes later, but was again denied by Schwarzer and then another save to deny van Nistelrooy.

Wilkshire's red card should have signalled a Netherlands onslaught, but Australia's resolve and character came to the fore as they doggedly held on wave after wave of attacks and rarely did they get a good look at goal inside the penalty area.

Robin van Persie was the main threat and in the 87th minute forced another good save from Schwarzer after a great faint gave him space to shoot on the edge of the area and then two minutes later, he crashed a free kick against the post, which fortunately for Australia went away from goal.

Asked after the match whether Schwarzer had done enough to secure the No.1 spot, Hiddink was still none to committal.

"We'll see, we'll see," he said. "Both are very good goalies, we'll make a decision in upcoming time." He also praised the team for its second half effort and was especially please with the improvement shown since the Greece game, which is said was a completely different kettle of fish from this game.

"With this performance you could see the team has improved on its tactical discipline," said Hiddink. "It was good to see."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. June 2006, 11.00			Donaustadion, Ulm, Germany									5872	
Liechtenstein..1 v. Australia..3													
half time, Liechtenstein..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Peter Jehle					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
2	DF	Martin Telser					2	DF	Lucas Neill	8(og)			
4	DF	Daniel Hasler (c)					3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				77
5	DF	Marco Ritzberger					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
18	DF	Sandor Maierhofer				69	4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		44		83
6	MF	Martin Stocklasa					7	MF	Brett Emerton				
8	MF	Ronny Buchel					8	MF	Josip Skoko				83*
9	MF	Thomas Beck				84*	11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				66
19	MF	Fabio D'Elia					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski	20			83**
7	FW	Benjamin Fischer				84	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				58
10	FW	Mario Frick					15	FW	John Aloisi	81			
SUBSTITUTES													
16	MF	Roger Beck				84	25	MF	Kristian Sarkies				83**
20	FW	Raphael Rohrer				84*	26	MF	Neil Kilkenney				83*
17	FW	Daniel Frick				69	17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				66
12	GK	Daniel Steuble					16	DF	Michael Beauchamp				77
14	MF	Wolfgang Kieber					12	GK	Ante Covic				
15	MF	Ranz-Josef Vogt					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
							19	FW	Joshua Kennedy	75			58
							22	DF	Mark Milligan				83
							5	MF	Jason Culina				
							13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
							14	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
							20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
							23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
							9	FW	Mark Viduka				
Team Coach		Martin Andermatt					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Wolfgang Stark (Germany)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report derived from FFA commentary.

As expected Guus Hiddink has made a host of changes with six new players into the side that drew with The Netherlands. Hiddink has changed formation by going with three stoppers in Moore, Neill and Popovic. Mario Frick is the dangerman for Liechtenstein, and has scored a lot of goals in Serie B with Ternana, but Liechtenstein take the lead after nine minutes when an innocent free kick, is misjudged by Neill and it skims off his head and deceives Kalac for an own goal.

It wasn't a good start by Australia and a bad ball by Emerton almost allows them in again, but Neill rescues the day this time.

The first corner comes after 15 minutes after the ball cleared away from in front of goal with Kewell lurking to convert Aloisi's low cross. From the corner Aloisi fires wide.

The goal seems to have woken the Aussies up. Lazaridis puts in a cross which is just a touch too high for Aloisi at the far post.

On 19 minutes Sterjovski scores after Lazaridis is put clear on the left, his low cross was missed by Aloisi, but Sterjovski is on hand to slam home from six yards.

Following a nice interchange of passes by Kewell, Cahill and Aloisi it ends with Aloisi being fouled 20 metres out. Aloisi takes the free kick driving a blistering shot just wide of the post.

Just before half-time Cahill receives a yellow card for an elbow in the face of Ritzberger as they contested a header.

Half time - 1-1

Not the best of halves from Australia, although they dominated the chances and most of the play.

Australia kick-off the second half but Kalac is quickly forced to smother a good opportunity, after a cross from right found Beck at the back post.

Liechtenstein have come out with a bit of self belief and Kalac has to make another save, albeit a comfortable one. Then a free kick from the left is headed wide of the far post by Moore.

Liechtenstein has a corner which is well worked and Kalac has to save a fierce shot by dangerman Frick.

A nice little lob pass by Emerton goes to Lazaridis but his cross is cut out by Jehle with Aloisi set to score.

At 58 minutes Australia substitutes Kewell with Josh Kennedy for his international debut.

A good chance for Australia as Aloisi breaks the offside trap, the cross for Kennedy is smothered by Jehle.

On 68 minutes Archie Thompson comes on for Lazaridis, and a minute later Liechtenstein substitutes Meierhofer with Daniel Frick.

The wave is going around which has finally woken the crowd up, but on 74 minutes Kennedy scores his first international goal, heading home a Brett Emerton cross to the far post... well taken.

At the restart Liechtenstein almost draw level, Kalac again forced to save from a Frick shot. A free kick by Liechtenstein is well worked, Frick's shot goes just wide of far top corner.

Directly after Moore is off, substituted by Michael Beauchamp.

After 82 minutes John Aloisi heads home a cross from Sterjovski, the keeper almost saved at the foot of the post but it squirmed over the line.

More substitutions for Australia. Cahill, Sterjovski and Skoko off - international debuts for Mark Milligan, Neil Kilkenney and Kristian Sarkies. Liechtenstein also substitutes, Fischer and Beck off - Rohrer & Beck on.

With time running out Beck shoots into the sidenetting. A good run and cross by Sarkies sees a Kennedy flick carried over the byline by the Liechtenstein goalkeeper at the near post.

Full time - Australia..3 Liechtenstein..1

Australia has won its final practice game before the World Cup finals start with a win over tiny European country Liechtenstein in Ulm. Australia's goals were scored by Mile Sterjovski, Josh Kennedy and John Aloisi.

Team Line-ups:-

Australia:- Zeljko Kalac (gk); Lucas Neill, Craig Moore, Tim Cahill, Tony Popovic, Brett Emerton, Josip Skoko, Harry Kewell, Stan Lazaridis, John Aloisi, Mile Sterjovski Subs from: Mark Schwarzer (gk);

Michael Beauchamp, Archie Thompson, Joshua Kennedy, Mark Milligan, Neil Kilkenney, Kristian Sarkies.

Liechtenstein:- Peter Jehle (gk); Daniel Hasler, Sandor Maierhofer, Martin Stocklasa, Martin Teber, Thomas Beck, Ronny Buchel, Fabio D'Elia, Ben Fischer, Mario Frick, Marco Ritzberger. Subs from: Daniel Steuble (gk);

Franz-Josef Vogt, Roger Beck, Daniel Frick, Raphael Rohrer, Wolfgang Kieber

Referee: Wolfgang Stark (Germany)

World Cup, Finals, 1st. Round														
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance			
12th. June 2006, 15.00			Fritz-Walter Stadion, Kaiserslautern, Germany								46000			
Japan..1 v. Australia..3														
half time, Japan..1 v. Australia..0														
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	
START LIST														
23	GK	Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					
5	DF	Tsuneyasu Miyamoto (c)		31			2	DF	Lucas Neill					
19	DF	Keisuke Tsuboi				56	3	DF	Craig Moore		58		61	
22	DF	Yuji Nakazawa					14	DF	Scott Chipperfield					
3	MF	Yuichi Komano					5	MF	Jason Culina					
7	MF	Hidetoshi Nakata					7	MF	Brett Emerton					
10	MF	Shunsuke Nakamura	26				10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell					
14	MF	Alessandro Santos					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		33			
15	MF	Takashi Fukunishi					20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				75	
9	FW	Naohiro Takahara		40			23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				53	
13	FW	Atsushi Yanagisawa				79	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)					
SUBSTITUTES														
1	GK	Seigo Narazaki					12	GK	Ante Covic					
12	GK	Yoichi Doi					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					
2	DF	Teruyuki Moniwa		68		56, 91	4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	84, 89	69		53	
4	MF	Yasuhito Endo					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic					
6	DF	Koji Nakata					8	MF	Josip Skoko					
8	MF	Mitsuo Ogasawara					11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					
11	FW	Seiichiro Maki					15	FW	John Aloisi	90+2	78		75	
16	FW	Masashi Oguro				91	16	DF	Michael Beauchamp					
17	MF	Junichi Inamoto					17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					
18	MF	Shinji Ono				79	19	FW	Joshua Kennedy				61	
20	FW	Keiji Tamada					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski					
21	DF	Akira Kaji					22	DF	Mark Milligan					
Team Coach		Zico					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink					
Team Manager							Team Manager							
Referee		Essam Abd El Fatah (Egypt)												
Assistant Referee 1		Dramane Dante (Mali)												
Assistant Referee 2		Mamadou Ndoeye (Senegal)												

match report from The Age

Australian soccer has never seen a more remarkable comeback, on a bigger stage, under more pressure, under greater duress.

The Socceroos returned to the World Cup finals in stunning style today, scoring three times in the final six minutes to secure a remarkable 3-1 victory over Japan in their opening Group F match.

Two goals to Tim Cahill and another to John Aloisi sealed Australia's win in its first World Cup appearance since 1974 after it trailed for most of the match to a disputed Japanese goal.

First substitute Cahill slammed home in the 84th minute amid a goalmouth scramble following a Lucas Neill long throw-in to break the 1-1 deadlock.

Then he struck a second as the clock ticked into injury-time with a long-range shot which cannoned off the post and in, sending the large Australian contingent in the 45,000 crowd into delirium.

Aloisi added a third minutes later to give Australia the best possible start to the tournament after it looked for much of the match that justice was going to again elude a team which has suffered so greatly in recent years.

Japan's Shunsuke Nakamura had scored his side's 26th minute goal after a dreadful refereeing blunder - with Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer clearly impeded by two Japanese players when trying to claim Nakamura's ball from the right.

First Atsushi Yanagisawa, then Naohiro Takahara clattered into Schwarzer - the second leaving him prone on the ground - as the ball dropped into an open goal.

But Egyptian referee Essam Abd El Fatah allowed the goal to stand, leaving furious Socceroos remonstrating over a decision which television replays showed was clearly wrong.

Japanese goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi looked like denying Australia anything from the match, making five outstanding saves in a game played in stifling 30-degree plus heat at the Fritz-Walter-Stadion in Kaiserslautern, south-west Germany.

First he made two close-range stops in the same movement from skipper Mark Viduka after just seven minutes.

Midfielder Marco Bresciano then forced Kawaguchi into a diving save to deny him in the 21st minute after more great interplay between him and Viduka.

Bresciano also went close late in the half with a long-range free-kick which went agonisingly into the side netting.

Then Kawaguchi denied Viduka what appeared a certain equaliser on 71 minutes, diving brilliantly to his right to push the Australian's free-kick around the post, before stop.

In two huge surprises, coach Guus Hiddink decided to start the game with Harry Kewell and Luke Wilkshire in midfield, and relegated Cahill to the bench.

Hiddink had indicated yesterday that he didn't believe Kewell was ready to play from kick-off after a groin injury had interrupted his preparation.

But Wilkshire's inclusion ahead of Cahill was even more stunning after the Bristol City midfielder had been sent off in last week's 1-1 friendly draw against Holland.

Yet Cahill's entry as a 53rd minute substitute proved yet another Hiddink masterstroke.
Australia now plays red-hot favourite Brazil in its next group match in Munich on June 18, before Croatia in Stuttgart on June 22.
Brazil and Croatia meet in their Group F clash in Berlin tomorrow.

World Cup, Finals, 1st. Round														
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
18th. June 2006, 18.00			Allianz Arena, Munich, Germany									66000		
Brazil..2 v. Australia..0														
half time, Brazil..0 v. Australia..0														
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	
START LIST														
1	GK	Nélson de Jesus Silva "Dida"					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					
2	DF	Marcos Evangelista de Moraes "Cafu" (c)		29			2	DF	Lucas Neill					
3	DF	Lucimar Ferreira da Silva "Lúcio"					3	DF	Craig Moore				69	
4	DF	Juan Silveira dos Santos					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				41	
6	DF	Roberto Carlos da Silva Rocha					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				56	
5	MF	Emerson Fereira da Rosa				72	7	MF	Brett Emerton		13			
11	MF	José Roberto da Silva Junior "Zé Roberto"					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					
7	FW	Adriano Leite Ribeiro	49			88	14	MF	Scott Chipperfield					
8	FW	Ricardo Izecson dos Santos Leite "Kaká"					5	FW	Jason Culina		39			
9	FW	Ronaldo Luiz Nazário de Lima "Ronaldo"		31		72	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)					
10	FW	Ronaldinho de Assis Moreira "Ronaldinho"					21	FW	Mile Sterjovski					
SUBSTITUTES														
12	GK	Rogério Ceni					12	GK	Ante Covic					
22	GK	Júlio César Soares de Espindola					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac					
13	DF	Cicero João de Cézare "Cicinho"					8	MF	Josip Skoko					
14	DF	Anderson Luis da Silva "Luisão"					10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				56	
15	DF	Cristiano Marques Gomes "Cris"					11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis					
16	DF	Gilberto da Silva Melo "Gilberto"					15	FW	John Aloisi				69	
17	MF	Gilberto Aparecido da Silva "Gilberto Silva"				72	16	DF	Michael Beauchamp					
18	MF	Carlos Luciano da Silva "Mineiro"					17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					
19	MF	Antônio Augusto Ribeiro Reis Junior "Juninho Pernambucano"					19	FW	Joshua Kennedy					
20	MF	Ricardo Luis Pozzi Rodrigues "Ricardinho"					20	MF	Luke Wilkshire					
21	FW	Frederico Chaves Guedes "Fred"	90			88	22	DF	Mark Milligan					
23	FW	Robson de Souza "Robinho"		83		72	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				41	
Team Coach		Carlos Alberto Gomes Parreira						Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager								Team Manager						
Referee		Markus Merk (Germany)												
Assistant Referee 1		Christian Schraer (Germany)												
Assistant Referee 2		Jan-Hendrik Salver (Germany)												

match report from The Age

Australia fought world champion Brazil bravely, but ultimately fruitlessly tonight, losing 2-0 in their World Cup Group F match in Munich.

Brazilian striker Adriano scored four minutes after half-time, while Fred tapped home to seal the match in the 89th minute after the Socceroos had put the world's best team under heavy second half pressure chasing an equaliser.

Substitute Harry Kewell perhaps had the best chance in the 57th minute - striking high and wide with the goal open after Brazilian goalkeeper Dida made a mess of a high ball.

Kewell also went agonisingly close in the 68th minute, whipping a long-range attempt just over the bar.

Midfielder Marco Bresciano forced Dida into a sensational save with 12 minutes left, launching a spectacular scissors kick at goal only for the keeper to pull it out of the net with a diving save to his right.

And inside the last 10 minutes, Mark Viduka sent a glancing header from a Bresciano free-kick just wide, then lofted another chance just over the bar.

As the game ebbed away, Brazil found a second goal when Fred tapped in after a shot that rebounded off the post to make the game safe.

Brazil now sits atop Group F with two wins from two matches.

But the Socceroos can advance to the second stage with only a draw in their final group match against Croatia in Stuttgart on Thursday if Japan cannot beat Brazil by two clear goals in its last game.

Croatia could only manage a 0-0 draw with Japan in Nuremberg earlier today, meaning they must beat Australia to have any chance of advancing from the group.

The Socceroos lost defender Tony Popovic with what appeared a leg injury five minutes before half-time, forcing a complete re-jig of its backline after coach Guus Hiddink started the match with five defenders.

Hiddink relegated Kewell, Bresciano and Luke Wilkshire to the bench for the match in three changes to the starting line-up which beat Japan 3-1 last week. Into the starting eleven came Popovic and midfielders Tim Cahill and Mile Sterjovski. But the Socceroos matched the Brazilians for much of the game, though Brazil also had its chances - the best when Kaka hit the bar with a header inside the final 15 minutes.

World Cup, Finals, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
22nd. June 2006, 21.00			Gottlieb-Daimler Stadion, Stuttgart, Germany								52000		
Croatia..2 v. Australia..2													
half time, Croatia..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Stipe Pletikosa		70			18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
3	DF	Josip Simunic		61	90+3		2	DF	Lucas Neill				
5	DF	Igor Tudor		38			3	DF	Craig Moore	38(pk)			
7	DF	Dario Simic		32	85		7	DF	Brett Emerton		81	87	
13	DF	Stjepan Tomas				83	4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				
10	MF	Niko Kovac (c)	56				5	MF	Jason Culina				
19	MF	Niko Kranjcar				65	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				63
2	FW	Darijo Srna	2				14	MF	Scott Chipperfield				75
8	FW	Marko Babic					9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				
9	FW	Dado Prso					10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell	79			
18	FW	Ivica Olic				74	21	FW	Mile Sterjovski				71
SUBSTITUTES													
12	GK	Joe Didulica					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
23	GK	Tomislav Butina					12	GK	Ante Covic				
4	DF	Robert Kovac					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
6	MF	Jurica Vranjes					8	MF	Josip Skoko				
11	DF	Mario Tokic					11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
14	MF	Luka Modric				74	15	FW	John Aloisi				63
15	MF	Ivan Leko					16	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
16	MF	Jerko Leko				65	17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
17	FW	Ivan Klasnic				83	19	FW	Joshua Kennedy				75
20	MF	Anthony Seric					20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
21	FW	Bosko Balaban					22	DF	Mark Milligan				
22	FW	Ivan Bosnjak					23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				71
Team Coach		Zlatko Kranjcar					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Graham Poll											
Assistant Referee 1		Philip Sharp (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		Glenn Turner (England)											

match report from Der Spiegel (English version).

Liverpool star Harry Kewell, the man of the match, sent the Australians into the second round for the first time in only their second World Cup tournament in 32 years with the equaliser 10 minutes from full time.

Passions overflowed in the final minutes with referee Graham Poll issuing red cards to Croatia's Dario Simic and Josip Simunic and Australia's Brett Emerton, who now will miss Australia's second round match against Italy on Monday.

Kewell saved the Australians from elimination after a horrendous blunder by goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac had gifted the Croatians their second goal 13 minutes after half time.

Kalac, one of six Australian players with Croatian background, had an eventful match picking the ball out of his own net after just two minutes off a free kick and then fumbling Niko Kovac's volley to allow the ball to go over the line.

Kalac was a surprise selection by coach Guus Hiddink ahead of regular keeper Mark Schwarzer, who had kept goal in the other two group games against Japan and Brazil.

The Australians went into the final group match two points ahead of Croatia and only needed a draw to reach the last sixteen. Australia, galvanised by the coaching of Dutchman Hiddink, showed incredible tenacity to fight back from being behind twice in the match before 56,000 fans.

The Aussies recovered from the shock of a second minute goal off a Darijo Srna free-kick to take the game to the 1998 semi-finalists in a dramatic opening half.

Mark Viduka chopped down Niko Kovac just outside the area and Srna beat Kalac with a swinging free kick to his right. It was Croatia's first goal of the tournament and gave them a huge lift so early in the match they had to win.

But the Australians recovered their poise and controlled the game for most of the opening half having several scoring chances before Craig Moore levelled in the 38th minute.

Referee Poll gave a penalty when Stjepan Tomas handled the ball in the area under Tim Cahill's challenge and Moore left goalkeeper Stipe Pletikosa stranded to equalise.

The Socceroos thought they should have had a seventh-minute penalty when Australian-raised defender Josip Simunic appeared to foul Viduka but the Australian skipper's pleas for a spot-kick were ignored by Poll.

Cahill had a header saved by Pletikosa on the half-hour and a minute later the goalkeeper had to dive to divert a rasping Harry Kewell left-foot volley away for a corner.

Australian midfielder Tim Cahill said: "This is unbelievable. It's a historic day for Australia. We fight, we respect each other, our team is like a family, we're disciplined."

Asked how he felt about taking on Italy in the knockout phase, Cahill told German television: "We're confident. We've shown what we can do."

World Cup, Finals, 2nd. Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
26th. June 2006, 17.00			Fritz-Walter Stadion, Kaiserslautern, Germany									46000	
Italy..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, Italy..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Gianluigi Buffon					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Fabio Grosso		29			2	DF	Lucas Neill				
5	DF	Fabio Cannavaro (c)					3	DF	Craig Moore				
19	DF	Gianluca Zambrotta		90+1			14	DF	Scott Chipperfield				
23	DF	Marco Materazzi			50		5	MF	Jason Culina				
8	MF	Gennaro Gattuso		89			13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		23		
20	MF	Simone Perrotta					20	MF	Luke Wilkshire		61		
21	MF	Andrea Pirlo					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				81
7	FW	Alessandro del Piero				75	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
9	FW	Luca Toni				56	4	FW	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		49		
11	FW	Alberto Gilardino				46	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				
SUBSTITUTES													
12	GK	Angelo Peruzzi					12	GK	Ante Covic				
14	GK	Marco Amelia					18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				
2	DF	Cristian Zaccardo					6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic				
4	MF	Daniele de Rossi					7	MF	Brett Emerton				
6	DF	Andrea Barzagli				56	8	MF	Josip Skoko				
10	MF	Francesco Totti	90+5(pk)			75	10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
13	DF	Alessandro Nesta					11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				
15	FW	Vincenzo Iaquinta				46	15	FW	John Aloisi				81
16	MF	Mauro Camoranesi					16	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
17	MF	Simone Barone					17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
18	FW	Filippo Inzaghi					19	FW	Joshua Kennedy				
22	DF	Massimo Oddo					22	DF	Mark Milligan				
Team Coach		Marcello Lippi					Team Coach		Guus Hiddink				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Luis Medina Cantalejo (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Victoriano Giraldez Carrasco (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 2		Pedro Medina Hernandez (Spain)											

match report from BBC

Francesco Totti came off the bench to score an injury-time penalty and put 10-man Italy into the quarter-finals.

With the clock ticking down, Fabio Grosso marauded down the left flank and worked his way into the box before falling over Lucas Neill's prone body.

Totti kept his nerve to convert with the last kick of the game, breaking Australian hearts in Kaiserslautern.

Luca Toni had earlier missed Italy's best chances, before Marco Materazzi's red card for a foul on Marco Bresciano.

The former Everton defender's dismissal, which was harsh to say the least, altered what had been an open game up until then, as both sides seemed to settle for keeping it tight.

The Socceroos, who had escaped on numerous occasions when Italy's strikers should have done better earlier in the game, failed to make the most of their one-man advantage despite a wealth of possession.

Tim Cahill, with a header, and Bresciano, with a long-range stinger, came close to snatching what had appeared to be an unlikely win before the game late on.

But, in truth, Italy keeper Gianluigi Buffon was largely untested and Guus Hiddink's side paid the price in the third minute of stoppage time when Totti, surprisingly left out in favour Alessandro del Piero, bagged his first goal of the competition.

It was reward for another superb defensive display from Marcelo Lippi's side, even if their attacking efforts left a lot to be desired.

Toni in particular was the most guilty in a profligate Azzurri attack, though he was unfortunate not to have done better with a header that went just wide early on and a later turn and shot that Mark Schwarzer stopped with his feet.

Other chances went begging for Italy, as Alberto Gilardino also failed to make the most of some decent openings without Schwarzer having to make another decent save.

But, after Materazzi's harsh dismissal, it was Australia who dominated possession and the shame for them was that they could only produce neat and tidy football, which was ultimately toothless without the injured Harry Kewell.

Scott Chipperfield, on his 50th international appearance, wasted their two best chances - twice firing straight at Buffon when well placed in the area.

And he and Australia were left to rue their lack of ambition at the death, as Totti stepped up to go some way to redeeming himself after a lacklustre tournament so far and stretch Italy's current run to 22 matches unbeaten.

The Azzurri will now play Ukraine after Oleg Blokhin's side defeated Switzerland on penalties in Cologne.

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
16th. August 2006, 19.30			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, New South Wales									32622	
Australia..2 v. Kuwait..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Kuwait..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
51	GK	Clint Bolton					22	GK	Nawaf Khaled Al-Khaldi				
31	DF	Alvin Ceccoli					2	DF	Yaqoub Al-Taher Abdullah				
35	DF	Jade North					5	DF	Nohair Al-Shammari (c)				
38	DF	Michael Valkanis					12	DF	Ahmad Al-Eidan				
30	MF	David Carney					30	DF	Fahad Awadh Shaheen				
33	MF	Mark Milligan					8	MF	Abdulrahman Mousa Al-Dawood		36		
44	MF	Stephen "Steve" Corica				90	17	MF	Bader Ahmed Al-Mutwa				
45	MF	Travis Dodd	75				18	MF	Jarah Mohammed Al-Ateeqi				
46	MF	Kevin Muscat (c)					19	MF	Nawaf Mubarak Al-Mutairi				87
17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				69	10	FW	Khalaf Salamah Al-Mutairi		32		79
19	FW	Joel Griffiths				56	20	FW	Fahad Hazza Al-Hamad Al-Fahad				84
SUBSTITUTES													
29	FW	Sasho Petrovski	86	57		56	15	DF	Waleed Ali Hussein Jumah				79
28	FW	Alex Brosque				69	38	FW	Nawaf Mohammad Al-Otaibi				87
49	MF	Matthew McKay				90	46	FW	Fahad Al-Rashidi				84
47	MF	Kristian Sarkies					4	DF	Naser Abdullah Deghaim Al-Hajeri				
50	MF	Stuart Musialik					7	FW	Khaled Abd Al-Kudos Zadah				
52	GK	Daniel "Danny" Vukovic					43	MF	Hussain Ali Hakem Al-Shammari				
54	DF	Iain Fyfe					44	GK	Shehab Kankone				
							45	MF	Abdulaziz Ahmad Al-Misha'an Al-Enezi				
							1	GK	Khaled Al-Rashidi				
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Mihai Stoichita				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Junjie Huang (People's Republic of China)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tiejun Liu (People's Republic of China)											
Assistant Referee 2		Dequan Zhou (People's Republic of China)											

Bader Ahmed Al-Mutwa is also shown as Bader Al-Motawaa. Jarah Mohammed Al-Ateeqi is also shown as Jarah Al-Ataiqi. Waleed Ali Hussein Jumah is also shown as Walied Jumah. Shehab Kankone is also shown as Shehab Kankoune.

match report from The Sydney Morning Herald

The motto of Australia's new confederation is: "The future is Asia." After the Socceroos' strong performance in Germany, many had assumed that, soon enough, a new footnote would need to be added to that slogan: "The future of Asia is Australia."

On last night's evidence that assumption may require some revision. The final scoreline flattered the Socceroos, with late goals doing much to cover the imperfections. Still, there is good news, and there can be little doubt that it is news to savour: for the Socceroos' 2-0 victory was enough to make them the first team to qualify for next year's Asian Cup.

Adelaide midfielder Travis Dodd was the man at the centre of the action, scoring the first goal and setting up the second as his teammates shrugged off the torpor that had plagued them for three-quarters of the match to secure their ticket to next year's tournament.

It capped an incredible debut in the green and gold for the 26-year-old, who enjoyed a match that was the exact mirror of his team's: sluggish start, promising middle, relapse into torpor, thrilling denouement.

The first goal was a genuine team effort, Alvin Ceccoli threading a perfectly weighted pass through for David Carney on the left before the Sydney wingman flew to the byline and cut back the ball for Dodd, who swept it home sweetly with his right instep. For the second, Dodd raced down the right before crossing for substitute Sasho Petrovski, who made no mistake with his tap-in.

It sounds simple, and it was. But for much of the first 75 minutes of the match, simplicity - in both set-up and execution - had eluded the Socceroos.

"It was what I anticipated," coach Graham Arnold said after the game. "I was pretty much certain that they were going to sit back en bloc, and try and make it as difficult as possible for us, and they did a good job on that.

The hardest thing to work on when you have limited time is cohesion in the attacking part of the field."

In fact the Socceroos spent most of the first 30 minutes in self-containment mode. They not only succeeded in shutting down the Kuwaitis - they threw themselves into the bargain as well.

The first 10 minutes unfolded in especially soporific fashion, a slovenly jumble of mistimed kicks, leaden passes, overcooked crosses and underdone headers.

The defenders stayed dangerously deep, the midfield appeared disorganised. There was, quite simply, neither shape nor direction to the Socceroos' play.

When Jade North spilt a simple trap, recovered the loose ball then maniacally sent it sailing over the byline just after 10 minutes, it was a worrying suggestion that Arnold's pre-match prediction of sparkling attacking play had been dangerously awry.

For all that, the Kuwaitis were hardly better. Their players flooded the midfield en masse, frustrating the already self-containing Socceroos and offering little better themselves in attack.

That seemed to spur the Socceroos into action, with good chances soon falling to Griffiths, Archie Thompson and Carney again. The urgency was there, the possession statistics were heavily in Australia's favour, but it remained a story with which Socceroos supporters have become familiar: conviction lacking in the final third of the pitch.

The second half was looking as if it would go the same way. Until, that is, Dodd's right foot made its timely late interventions.

Arnold said of him: "You rely on that type of person. Travis is the type of player that can really step up. This is his debut. He's shown that he's got a lot of promise, but [in the past] he's been maybe a little bit inconsistent. Now he's mature - he's 26, and when you've got pace like that and you can play like that, you can easily adapt to the international stage."

Arnold, Frank Lowy and the FFA will be heartened by the signs to come out of last night.

"Overall I'm very happy with the fact that the players kept their patience, they kept their structure. We didn't play stupid," Arnold said.

"Now they've got that one game out of the way, hopefully they'll be a little more relaxed next time. [But] they've shown that they can step up."

With the Socceroos at full strength, Asia may soon find itself marching to the beat of a green-and-gold drum after all.

AUSTRALIA 2 (T Dodd 76, S Petrovski 87) KUWAIT 0 at Aussie Stadium, Sydney.

Crowd: 32,622

Referee: J Huang (Chn).

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
6th. September 2006,			Kaifan Sports Club Stadium, Kuwait City, Kuwait									8000	
Kuwait..2 v. Australia..0													
half time, Kuwait..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
22	GK	Nawaf Khaled Al-Khaldi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Yaqoub Al-Taher Abdullah		65			24	DF	Ljubo Milicevic		90+2		
5	DF	Nohair Al-Shammari (c)					26	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
12	DF	Ahmad Al-Eidan					36	DF	Jon McKain		58		
30	DF	Fahad Awadh Shaheen				38	8	MF	Josip Skoko (c)				
8	MF	Abdulrahman Mousa Al-Dawood		55			14	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
17	MF	Bader Ahmed Al-Mutwa	60				25	MF	Brett Holman				
18	MF	Jarah Mohammed Al-Ateeqi					20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				62
19	MF	Nawaf Mubarak Al-Mutairi	55				21	FW	Ahmad Elrich				30
10	FW	Khalaf Salamah Al-Mutairi				82	39	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
20	FW	Fahad Hazza Al-Hamad Al-Fahad				40	15	FW	John Aloisi				
SUBSTITUTES													
15	DF	Waleed Ali Hussein Jumah				38	27	FW	Scott McDonald				62
4	DF	Naser Abdullah Deghaim Al-Hajeri				82	60	FW	Ryan Griffiths		32		30
49	FW	Farag Saeed				40	12	GK	Ante Covic				
44	GK	Shehab Kankone					32	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
14	MF	Nawaf Alshuwaye					42	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Ward				
43	MF	Hussain Ali Hakem Al-Shammari					57	MF	Jacob Burns				
7	FW	Khaled Abd Al-Kudos Zadah											
38	FW	Nawaf Mohammad Al-Otaibi											
46	FW	Fahad Al-Rashidi											
Team Coach		Mihai Stoichita					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Toru Kamikawa (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hiroshi Tezuka (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Yasuhiko Yamazaki (Japan)											

match report from the AFC

Not even the presence of Australia's Europe-based contingent could stop Kuwait from avenging last month's defeat in Sydney as Mihai Stoichita's team downed the Socceroos 2-0 in AFC Asian Cup qualifying on Wednesday evening.

Two goals in three second-half minutes from Khalaf Al Mutairi and Bader Al Mutwaa earned the hosts their first win of the qualifying campaign and put them in with a chance of progressing to the finals next year in South East Asia.

Held in hot and humid conditions, the first chance of the game fell to the Kuwaitis as Al Mutwaa made his way past several Australian defenders in the 14th minute before shooting straight at goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer.

Four minutes later, Michael Beauchamp should have headed home the opener but his effort flew just inches away from Nawaf Al Khaldi's goal.

In the 21st minute, Al Mutwaa broke through the Australian defence before passing the ball to Al Mutairi, whose powerful shot was blocked by Schwarzer.

John Aloisi, who finished the game with four stitches in his face, should have given the Australians the lead in the 30th minute when he received the ball inside the penalty area, but he blasted the ball off target to keep the game scoreless.

Kuwait goalkeeper Al Khaldi had his hands full in the final minutes of the first half as he blocked a powerful drive from Mile Sterjovski from the edge of the area in the 32nd minute.

However, the most notable chance in the first half came three minutes before the break when Ryan Griffiths, who has just came in the place of the injured Ahmed Elrich, saw his shot hit the woodwork.

Kuwait went into the second half looking for victory and they took advantage as the heat took its toll on Australia and Khalaf Al Mutairi made it 1-0 in the 56th minute.

Nawaf Al Mutairi made his way into the Australian defence before sending an accurate cross to Khalaf Al Mutairi, who won his encounter with Schwarzer to head home the opening goal.

Three minutes later, Kuwait secured the victory when Al Mutwaa edged several defenders before shooting from the edge of the area to make the score 2-0.

Australia tried to come back and the nearly pulled a goal back in the 75th minute when Scot Macdonald saw his powerful shot from inside the penalty area saved by Kuwait goalkeeper Nawaf Al Khaldi.

"I told you before the match that it's going to be a tough game. We are very disappointed because we had chances in the first half to kill the game off and it's really disappointing that we couldn't do that," said Australia's coach Graham Arnold. "We definitely had the better chances to win the game in the first half and it would have been a totally different game if we had scored. We knew the longer the game is going we'll be more tired because of the heat factor. That's why we were hoping to score in the first half and kill the game. We were not used to such weather in this part of the world. The heat and humid took its toll on our players as we are not used to 40 degrees and the players struggled in the heat. We have to give credit to Kuwait as they completely rose to the occasion tonight. They were really up for the game, disciplined and organized. At the end of the day they had better performance. The disappointing thing in the game was the two goals that we conceded. For the first goal we didn't track back and the second goal was simply a wonderful goal."

"We had a good game tonight as we created a lot of chances," said Australia's striker John Aloisi. "However, Kuwait were very good technically and when they took the lead in the second half they controlled the game.

Kuwait are used to the conditions more than us as we haven't played in such hot conditions like this. I'm not making any excuses but I don't realize that it was going to be hot like this. We never thought that it was going to be easy but you can't just come two days before the match in order to get accustomed to such weather. You should prepare very well under such conditions."

"I told the players before the game that I'm proud of them," said Kuwait coach Mihai Stoichita. "I told them that they are a good team and that they should behave like professionals. All the team today was great and all the players should get the credit. To beat a big team like Australia who played in the World Cup and are ranked as the top team in Asia is something great. I believe it's a step towards better football in Kuwait. I'm proud of the players and I congratulate them with this great victory as they played very well tonight."

"It was a good game and we successfully won the three points at home," said Kuwait striker Bader Al Mutwa. "In Sydney we played in a defensive way and we could have got a draw. We made some mistakes in the previous match but today we fixed them and won. Our players had a good game and we defeated Australia with their European based players. We still have our last game in the group against Bahrain and it will be a winner-takes-all match."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
7th. October 2006,			Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, Queensland									47609	
Australia..1 v. Paraguay..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. Paraguay..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Zeljko Kalac				89	1	GK	Justo Villar				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					3	DF	Delio Toledo				
5	DF	Antony "Tony" Vidmar				72	4	DF	Carlos Gamarra (c)				64
6	DF	Antony "Tony" Popovic	88			90	6	DF	Carlos Bonet				84
7	MF	Brett Emerton					15	DF	Julio Manzur		25		
8	MF	Josip Skoko				59	8	MF	Edgar Barreto				
11	MF	Stanley "Stan" Lazaridis				50	10	MF	Roberto Acuna				72
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					16	MF	Cristian Riveros				
4	FW	Timothy "Tim" Cahill		55			21	MF	Jose Domingo Salcedo				77
15	FW	John Aloisi					9	FW	Oscar Cardozo				
23	FW	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				90*	23	FW	Nelson Cuevas				72*
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				89	14	DF	Paulo da Silva				64
26	DF	Jade North				72		DF	Jorge Nunez				77
16	DF	Michael Beauchamp	90(og)			90	2	DF	Pedro Sarabia				84
19	MF	Jason Culina		75		59	11	MF	Diego Gavilan		87		72
17	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				50	7	FW	Salvador Cabanas				72*
22	DF	Mark Milligan				90*	12	GK	Derlis Gomez				
12	GK	Ante Covic					17	MF	Jose Montiel				
20	MF	Luke Wilkshire											
28	FW	Alex Brosque											
45	MF	Travis Dodd											
14	MF	Scott Chipperfield											
39	MF	Mile Sterjovski											
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Raul Vicente Amarilla				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Joji Kashiara (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ben Wilson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Jason Power (Australia)											

match report from The Age

A late own-goal by young defender Michael Beauchamp put a dampener on the Socceroos' World Cup homecoming party with Australia and Paraguay finishing at 1-1 at Suncorp Stadium tonight.

Beauchamp's unfortunate header into his own net came just moments after retiring defender Tony Popovic looked to have secured the perfect farewell.

Popovic, one of four Socceroos bringing an end to his international career tonight, put Australia in front 1-0 in the 88th minute of a game in which the home side dominated throughout.

But Beauchamp, who had replaced Popovic only one minute earlier, inadvertently headed the ball into his own net in the third minute of stoppage time to leave the friendly drawn 1-1.

Popovic, goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac, Tony Vidmar and Stan Lazaridis were all afforded individual send-offs during an emotional second half in their final games for Australia.

The match was the first to feature a near-full strength Socceroos side since the team's historic run into the second round of the World Cup.

With a record crowd of 47,609 in attendance, the homecoming party looked set to end in a stalemate before Popovic beat his defender in the box and headed home Mark Bresciano's free kick in the 88th.

The veteran defender could hardly have scripted a better ending to a celebrated career.

But just when the party looked set to click into high gear, Paraguayan substitute delivered a dangerous cross into the box which Beauchamp, under pressure from towering striker Oscar Cardozo, headed past Schwarzer and into the net.

Schwarzer had only just come on as a substitute for Kalac, while Lazaridis (50th) and Vidmar (73rd) were also granted individual send offs from coach Graham Arnold.

Australia enjoyed the lion share of possession throughout the match but constantly fell down in the attacking third.

Defender Lucas Neill, who was rock solid at the back for Australia, became the 50th player to captain Australia.

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
11th. October 2006,			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, New South Wales									36606	
Australia..2 v. Bahrain..0													
half time, Australia..2 v. Bahrain..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					21	GK	Sayed Mohamed Jaafar Sabt Abbas				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					25	DF	Faouzi Mubarak Aaish				
7	DF	Brett Emerton					53	DF	Abbas Saeed Ali Mansoor Ayyad				
14	DF	Scott Chipperfield					32	DF	Jasim Mohamed Al-Chuban				
26	DF	Michael Beauchamp					40	DF	Ebrahim Ali Hasan Moshkhas				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella					27	MF	Ali Aamer Musaifer (c)				
17	MF	Jason Culina					43	MF	Mahmood Abdulrahman Mohammed Noor ("Ringo")				
4	FW	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				81	49	MF	Mahmood Mohamed				61
15	FW	John Aloisi	17				51	MF	Husein Al-Shekar				68
23	FW	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	24			67	52	MF	Mahmood Ayyad				
39	FW	Mile Sterjovski				75	28	FW	Ismail Hassan Abdul-Latif				88
SUBSTITUTES													
8	MF	Josip Skoko				81	46	MF	Fahad Hasan				61
45	MF	Travis Dodd				67	38	DF	Mohamed Mahmood				68
22	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				75	44	FW	Ibrahim Khaled Ibrahim Juma Fadhel Al-Mugla				88
12	GK	Ante Covic					45	GK	Abbas Ahmed Khamis				
33	DF	Mark Milligan					47	DF	Sadeq Jaafar				
35	DF	Jade North					48	MF	Mahmood Merza Mahdi Ahmed Al-Ajmi				
46	DF	Kevin Muscat					50	DF	Alaa Ayyad				
28	FW	Alex Brosque					54	MF	Hamad Faisal Shaikh Sanad Abdulla Al-Banki				
61	FW	Daniel "Danny" Allsopp					55	MF	Mohamed Saad				
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Senad Kreso				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Fareed Ali Mohamed Al-Marzouqi (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ahmed Yaqoob Mohamed (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mohamed Jesem Saif Hamad Al-Mehairi (United Arab Emirates)											

Ebrahim Ali Hasan Moshkhas is also shown as Ebrahim Al Meshkhas. Abbas Ahmed Khamis is also shown as Abbas Ahmed Ali Khamis.

match report from the FFA

Mark Bresciano scored a memorable goal that will long live in the memory of those at the Sydney Football Stadium, as the Qantas Socceroos cruised to a 2-0 win against Bahrain.

The Palermo midfielder's stunning acrobatic volley in the 24th minute, had the crowd gasping, as he stood in a similar pose to when he scored his crucial goal in the match against Uruguay at Telstra Stadium 11 months ago.

It was a match that Australia always had in control, once they took the lead after 17 minutes through John Aloisi, his 25th goal for Australia and leaves him just four behind leading goal scorer Damian Mori.

The win secures top spot on the group table and almost certainly a seeding at the Asian Cup finals next July.

However the night ultimately was a frustrating one for the home side, and the 36,606 fans at Sydney Football Stadium, as Australia couldn't add to their early goals. This despite dominating territory and possession for the entire match, against an inexperienced, but well organised Bahraini side.

As expected Bahrain put as many men behind the ball as possible and play on the counter attack and after a few anxious moments at the start for Australia, they soon settled down.

After applying most of the early pressure the breakthrough came in the 17th minute, when a series of short passes on the edge of the box, saw Bresciano feed Aloisi and he took one touch before toe-poking his shot home. Bresciano then saw a shot sprayed wide, while a mistake by Jason Culina saw Al Chuban get into the penalty area and force a save from Schwarzer.

However the moment of the match came soon after, when Chipperfield's crossed to the back post for the excellent Sterjovski. With Aloisi appealing for a penalty after being clearly dragged down, Sterjovski half-volled the ball back across goal, where Bresciano flung himself horizontally in the air and hit the perfect volley that thundered into the back of the net.

"I am happy I reacted quick enough, because it came to me pretty quick," said Bresciano. "I actually scored one a couple of weeks at club level pretty similar, so I have been lucky enough they have come off for me. It was tough for us, because we knew at the start they were going to stack up the defence and make it hard for us to break them down. We were patient enough to wait for the right opportunities and we got these two goals. I thought we could have got more, but at the end its not important how many goals we scored, but its important that we won," he added.

But from that time on it was to be nothing but frustration, as the Bahrain players started to niggle the Australians and slow down play as much as they could.

Aloisi had the ball in the back of the net again on the half hour with a fine header, but was ruled marginally offside.

The next serious chance came in the 57th minute, when Chipperfield completely miskicked a Sterjovski cross with only the keeper to beat.

Three minutes later Sterjovski was inches from making it 3-0 when he ran onto a great long pass and hit a smashing volley from the corner of the box that hit the underside of the bar.

The match then deteriorated into a stop-start affair with the referee continually pulling up play and having to get the stretcher on with repeated regularity for the Bahrain players, who were going down like nine-pins.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
14th. November 2006,			Loftus Road Stadium, London, England									14379	
Ghana..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Ghana..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
22	GK	Richard Paul Franck Kingson				59	1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Hans Adu Sarpei					3	DF	Craig Moore				46
13	DF	Habib Mohamed					7	DF	Brett Emerton				
20	DF	Francis Dickoh					11	DF	Scott Chipperfield		60		
18	DF	Eric Addo		30			16	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
10	MF	Stephen Appiah (c)					5	MF	Jason Culina				
8	MF	Michael Essien					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella (c)				53
7	MF	Laryea Kingston		56		84	20	MF	Luke Wilkshire				75
11	MF	Sulley Ali Muntari					15	FW	John Aloisi	27(pk)			
25	FW	Manuel "Junior" Agogo	75				23	FW	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				78
17	FW	Peter Ofori-Quaye				71	21	FW	Mile Sterjovski				
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Sammy Adjei				59	6	DF	Michael Thwaite				46
23	MF	Haminu Dramani				84	19	MF	Kasey Wehrman				53
3	MF	Asamoah Gyan				71	60	FW	Ryan Griffiths				78
15	DF	John Paintsil					10	MF	Brett Holman				75
19	FW	Razak Pimpong					40	GK	Michael Petkovic				
							26	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
							14	DF	Shane Stefanutto				
Team Coach		Claude Le Roy					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Mark Clattenburg (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Gavin Ward (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		James Linington (England)											

match report from the FFA

An unfortunate clash between Mark Schwarzer and Patrick Kisnorbo has handed Ghana a 1-1 draw in an entertaining match against the Qantas Socceroos at Loftus Road in London.

John Aloisi's penalty had put Australia deservedly in front at half-time, but as Schwarzer went down having taken a low cross, the ball hit Kisnorbo in the head, bobbled free and Nottingham Forest's Ghanaian striker Junior Agogo tapped home.

Australia though put in a terrific performance against the highly-rated Ghana team and but for the heroics of its goalkeeper Richard Kingston, the Qantas Socceroos would have won the match.

The only downside from the match was the foot injury to captain Vince Grella, who went off early in the second half, which for a while unsettled the Australian midfield.

Australian went out with an attacking line-up, playing John Aloisi up front with Marco Bresciano and Mile Sterjovski in advanced roles alongside him. And it only took a minute for Sterjovski to test Kingston, who had to dive full stretch to keep out the FC Basel strikers shot from going into the top corner.

It was to the first of many saves Kingston would make in the first half, as he single-handedly thwarted Australia's attacking raids.

The 13th minute proved unlucky for Australia, with Kingston denying Jason Culina twice, while Aloisi was just inches away from opening the scoring from Sterjovski's low cross to the near post.

The inevitable goal eventually came, when Aloisi did well to bully his way into the box and was chopped down from behind by Francis Dickoh near the by-line and referee Mark Clattenburg had no hesitation awarding a penalty.

Aloisi, as he did almost a year to the day against Uruguay, made no mistake from the penalty spot and in the process became Australia's second highest goalscorer of all-time.

Luke Wilkshire should have made it 2-0 in the 31st minute, when he had a free header from eight yards, but directed it straight at Kingston.

Schwarzer didn't make his first meaningful save until the 34th minute, going low to his left to save a Michael Essien shot.

Kingston though was the busier of the two keepers and in the 37th minute pulled off a world class save to deny Craig Moore, whose bullet header had goal written all over it until Kingston's stunning intervention at full stretch.

Appiah had a golden chance to equalise for Ghana just before the break, but skewed his shot across the face and Australia deservedly was ahead at the break. Arnold made his first substitution at the break with Michael Thwaite coming on for Craig Moore and Ghana looked more intent after half time, although on several occasions the Qantas Socceroos looked dangerous on the break.

However Australia's midfield dominance was soon to be unsettled with Grella forced off in the 53rd minute, after a knock to his foot.

Two minutes later, Emerton's quick reaction saw Kingston produce another flying save and that was soon followed with another to stop a Culina low drive. That though was to be the last of the action for Kingston, who was given a standing ovation from the field.

Ghana upped the ante, with Essien forcing another save from Schwarzer down low and Muntari shooting wide shortly after.

With play going from end to end, Ghana got their equalizer in rather fortunate circumstances, when a dangerous looking cross from substitute Gyan, looked to be comfortably held by Schwarzer. But as he came down, the ball hit the head of a prone Kisorbo on the ground and the ball spilled out of the keeper's hands and it was an easy finish for Agogo.

Rather then sit back, Australia tried to hit back quickly, with substitute Brett Holman first getting a strike on goal from the edge of the box and then he wriggled his way brilliantly into the box, but skewed his shot across the face, although a sliding Ryan Griffiths was inches away from tucking the ball home.

The match was pulsating with Aloisi this time denied by substitute keeper Adeji, while up the other end Schwarzer produced his best save, standing tall to deny a first time close range volley from Muntari.

Australia pressed for a winner and Kisorbo was inches away from heading home at the back post from a free kick, while an Aloisi cross was cut out by Adeji with Holman charging in to strike home.

After the match Graham Arnold said, "I am over the moon (with the performance). I have just spoken with the players; I'm so proud of them. Once again they've shown their commitment for the cause, but overall the performance was outstanding. The second half we were a little bit disjointed and that came down to making as many subs as I made, and the loss of Vinnie Grella, that is how important he is to the new system that I am trying to implement. But we've got four young boys that showed tonight that they're the future, that they can handle the level and that they have to step up for the 2010 World Cup."

2007

Date & Time				Venue				Weather				Temperature		Attendance	
6th. February 2007, 19.30				Loftus Road Stadium, London, England										12476	
Denmark..3 v. Australia..1															
half time, Denmark..3 v. Australia..0															
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution		
START LIST															
1	GK	Thomas Sorensen					1	GK	Michael Petkovic						
4	DF	Daniel Agger					5	DF	Michael Thwaite						
7	DF	Lars Jacobsen					6	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo						
3	DF	Michael Gravgaard				76	11	DF	Scott Chipperfield						
5	DF	Niclas Jensen					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				75		
2	MF	Christian Poulsen					7	MF	Brett Emerton (c)	85					
6	MF	Daniel Jensen	28			68	8	MF	Josip Skoko				67		
11	MF	Dennis Rommedahl				46	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella						
8	MF	Thomas Kahlenberg					14	MF	Brett Holman						
9	FW	Jon Dahl Tomasson (c)	5, 38				15	FW	John Aloisi						
10	FW	Martin Jorgensen				71	21	FW	Mile Sterjovski						
SUBSTITUTES															
13	DF	Per Kroeldrup				76	19	MF	Jacob Burns				67		
15	MF	Rasmus Wuertz				68	17	FW	Ryan Griffiths				75		
14	MF	Claus Jensen				71		GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones						
17	FW	Jesper Gronkjaer				46		DF	Shane Stefanutto						
								DF	Jon McKain						
								FW	Scott McDonald						
								MF	Neil Kilkeny						
Team Coach		Morten Olson					Team Coach		Graham Arnold						
Team Manager							Team Manager								
Referee		Rob Styles (England)													
Assistant Referee 1															
Assistant Referee 2															

match report from FFA

The Qantas Socceroos unbeaten run in London has come to an end, after going down to a very classy Denmark side 3-1 this morning. The Danes scored three first half goals, with Australia's captain for the game Brett Emerton, scoring a late consolation goal.

While the scoreline says Australia was well beaten, the match was much closer than that suggests and the entertaining match could well have featured many more goals, with Australia having two disallowed and one off the crossbar.

Denmark, who are preparing for a crucial Euro 2008 qualifier against Spain next month, went into the match almost at full strength, while Australian coach Graham Arnold was forced to make eight changes to his initial squad, including the late withdrawal of Mark Viduka.

The match got off to the worst possible start for Australia, when Mile Sterjovski lost control of the ball 30 metres out, with Kahlenberg quickly flicking the ball to Tomasson. In one motion, Tomasson turned the ball onto his right foot and without looking up at the goal, blasted his shot into the top corner, with Michael Petkovic rooted to his spot and no chance of saving.

Australia's response was almost instant though, with John Aloisi wriggling free of his marker, with a clear shot on goal, but off-balance he completely missed his shot.

A minute later, Sterjovski, who was impressive going forward down the right all night, got into the penalty box, with his cross beating Thomas Sorensen, but Liverpool's Daniel Agger was on the spot to clear off the line, with Brett Holman waiting to tap home. From the ensuing corner, Aloisi pwered a header goalwards, but Sorensen was equal to the task and pushed clear.

Tomasson saw another effort go across the face of goal shortly afterwards, with both sides showing their attacking intent.

Dennis Rommedaal was inches away from making it 2-0 in the 19th minute, when he met a superb cross from the left, but his shot just lobbed over the bar.

Not long after came a crucial moment in the match, when Michael Thwaite thought he had scored an equaliser, only to have it ruled away because of an apparent foul by Aloisi, although it was Aloisi who looked like he had been pushed in the back.

Then came the classic sucker-punch, as Denmark went two up in the 28th minute. Wonderful passing and movement by the Danes had Australia's defence at sixes and sevens and Rommedaal's cross found David Jensen, who powered his header past Petkovic.

Kahlenberg nearly made it 3-0 with his free kick just going wide of the near post, but Tomasson did score in the 38th minute, when he met Rommedaal's cross from the left and tucked home easily from 8 yards.

That was effectively game, set and match.

Again Australia responded strongly with another goal from Aloisi ruled out for offside (correctly); Tim Cahill having an effort saved by Sorensen; and Aloisi's half chance from close range cleared off the line all before the half time break.

The second half saw Australia come out strongly and keen to make up for the disappointing first half and should have pulled a goal back after just three minutes.

Aloisi was just a second too late to meet a Holman through ball, which Sorensen cleared only as far as Sterjovski, who in turn hit a 40 yard volley that Sorensen just managed to thump away. The ball was kept in by Australia and when Aloisi clipped a ball over the top of the defence to Sterjovski, a goal looked certain, but the FC Basel midfielder's side-foot volley smacked against the crossbar. It was not going to be Australia's night.

The Danes always looked dangerous on the break and nearly caught Australia out in the 64th minute, with Petkovic denying Kahlenberg, while Rasmus Wuertz beat Petkovic, but saw his shot hit the outside of the post.

With substitutions coming thick and fast from both sides now, it was one of Australia's that provided some spark, Ryan Griffiths almost winning a penalty when he was blatantly body-checked as he raced into the box. However, from the 85th minute free kick, captain Brett Emerton brilliantly curled his shot over the wall and into the top corner, to give Australia a deserved consolation goal.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
24th. March 2007,			Yue Xiu Shan Stadium, Guangzhou, China				Humid					20000	
People's Republic of China..0 v. Australia..2													
half time, People's Republic of China..0 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Li Lei-lei						GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Du Wei						DF	Lucas Neill				
7	DF	Sun Jihai						DF	Shane Steffanuto				65
13	DF	Xu Yunlong						DF	Michael Beauchamp		32		
6	MF	Shao Jiayi				60		DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
10	MF	Zheng Zhi (c)						MF	Luke Wilkshire				
12	MF	Cao Yang						MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	28			80
15	MF	Zhao Jun-zhe				45		MF	Carl Valeri				90
9	FW	Li Jinyu				82		MF	Mile Sterjovski				85
16	FW	Mao Jianqing				75		FW	Brett Holman	8	69		69
17	FW	Du Zhen-yu				38		FW	Mark Viduka (c)				76
SUBSTITUTES													
8	MF	Zhou Haibin						DF	Jade North				65
11	FW	Dong Fangzhuo				38		MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				80
19	FW	Han Peng				60		MF	Jacob Burns				90
20	MF	Yan Song				75		FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				69
28	MF	Wang Dong				82		DF	Simon Colosimo				85
	MF	Yu Tao				45		FW	Scott McDonald				76
Team Coach		Zhu Guanghou					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Wu Chao Jue (Hong Kong)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from The Sydney Morning Herald

The doom and gloom about Socceroos player stocks dwindling due to post World and Asia Cup retirements may prove premature after several fringe players used the game against China to state their case for a role in Australia's 2010 World Cup campaign.

Defenders Michael Beauchamp and Patrick Kisnorbo, both with limited international experience, were solid against one of Asia's better teams, and debutant Shane Stefanutto, after a nervous start, played most of the game before being substituted in the second half.

But the two who impressed most were fellow debutant Carl Valeri and attacking midfielder Brett Holman. Both are in their early 20s, both play at unglamorous clubs - Valeri at lower division Italian side Grosseto, Holman in Holland with NEC Nijmegen - and both did their chances of making the Asia Cup squad in July no harm with their performances in Guangzhou against an almost full-strength Chinese team.

In a revamped 3-4-3 structure, the inexperienced pair (it was Holman's third cap for Australia) occupied pivotal midfield roles.

Valeri, whom coach Graham Arnold believes can become Vince Grella's understudy, played as a holding midfielder, while Holman played at the point of the midfield diamond, dropping deep to provide a link between defence and attack and breaking forward to support Mark Viduka and the wide men, Mark Bresciano and Mile Sterjovski, when they cut in to attacking positions.

Holman was rewarded with his first goal for Australia, driving home a pass from Bresciano when the pair broke into the Chinese penalty area, while Valeri looked assured throughout as he shielded the back three whenever the Chinese attacked.

"I am delighted with some of the young boys and the way they performed," Arnold said after the game. "Carl Valeri came through, we need him to step up for the future, and Brett Holman's work rate was phenomenal in defence and attack. Valeri was outstanding for a kid making his debut in the middle of the park. I have a huge amount of faith in him. I have known him from the under-20s. Holman, he's now had three games and he keeps getting better. It was good to see him score."

Holman admitted afterwards that seeing the ball hit the back of the net was a weight off his shoulders.

"It was fantastic. I played in the last couple of games, had a couple of chances and didn't bag one and it plays on your mind a little bit when you don't hit the net. We had a great performance first half, we got a bit fatigued in the second."

Valeri, 22, has been in Italy for the past two years, having signed a deal with Serie A giants Inter Milan. They have loaned him to Grosseto, currently top of Serie C1 (the third division) and both clubs now have a 50 per cent stake in his contract. In June, Inter will decide whether they want to buy him back, or Grosseto can opt to make the move permanent.

"Grosseto is top of the table, the team is constructed to go to Serie B," Valeri said. "I took a risk staying there this year, but so far it's paying off."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
2nd. June 2007,			Telstra Stadium, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)									61795	
Australia..1 v. Uruguay..2													
half time, Australia..1 v. Uruguay..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					1	GK	Héctor Fabián Carini Hernández				
2	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Diego Alfredo Lugano Morena				
4	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				84	6	DF	Octavio Dario Rodríguez Peña		X		72
16	DF	Michael Thwaite		X			8	DF	Carlos Andrés Diogo Enseñat		X		
13	MF	Carl Valeri					19	DF	Andrés Scotti Ponce de León				26
5	MF	Jason Culina				70	5	MF	Pablo Gabriel García Pérez				
10	MF	Luke Wilkshire		X			10	MF	Álvaro Alexander Recoba Rivero	77			83
21	MF	Mile Sterjovski	6			55	15	MF	Diego Fernando Pérez Aguado				46
7	FW	Brett Emerton		X			7	FW	Cristian Gabriel Rodríguez Barotti				
8	FW	Brett Holman				62	21	FW	Diego Forlán Corazo	40			87
11	FW	Scott McDonald					22	FW	Vicente Martín Sánchez Bragunde				
SUBSTITUTES													
12	FW	Daniel "Danny" Allsopp				84	20	MF	Néstor Fabián Canobbio Bentaberry				72
17	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				70	18	MF	Guillermo Gonzalo Giacomazzi Suárez		X		46
15	FW	Ryan Griffiths				55	4	DF	Jorge Ciro Fucile Perdomo				26
19	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				62	11	FW	Fabián Larry Estoyanoff Poggio				87
							3	DF	Mauricio Bernardo Victorino Dansilo				
							9	FW	Gonzalo Vargas Abella				
							12	GK	Mario Sebastián Viera Galain				
							13	FW	Washington Sebastián Abreu Gallo				83
							16	DF	Gastón Filgueira Méndez				
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Oscar Tabarez				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Roberto Rosetti (Italy)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ben Wilson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Nathan Gibson (Australia)											

match report from FFA

A blunder by debutant goalkeeper Brad Jones has gifted Uruguay an undeserved 2-1 win over Ausralia at Telstra Stadium tonight.

Jones, under no pressure, inexplicably dropped a Guillermo Giacomazzi cross from the right, allowing Alvaro Recoba the simple task of heading into an empty net. That proved to be the winner, as Australia bombarded the Uruguay penalty box in the final ten minutes in search of the equaliser, but to no avail.

The goal was an injustice to an Australian side that more than matched their more experienced and credentialed Uruguayan opponents throughout the entire 90 minutes.

Australia had opened the scoring after six minutes, through Mile Sterjovski, but the scores were level in the 40th minute when Diego Forlan pounced from close range. The match was delicately poised, until Jones untimely error in the 77th minute.

However while the result left a 'sour taste' in Graham Arnold's mouth after the match, he couldn't fault the performance of his young team, with several doing their chances of playing at the Asian Cup finals in July no harm at all.

While the five World Cup players, led by example, the likes of Michael Thwaite, Patrick Kisnorbo, Brett Holman, Scott McDonald and Carl Valeri all performed with distinction, on what was a tough and often torrid night against 'Les Celeste'.

Australia started superbly controlling possession and looking to get down the flanks, particularly on the left to expose Diogo.

Sterjovski proved to be his tormentor in the opening half and it was the FC Basel midfielder, who provided the perfect start for the home side.

Emerton did brilliantly down the right to beat two defenders; sending in a low cross that caused confusion in the Uruguay defence. After several swipes at the ball by Sterjovski in the six-yard box, he managed to get clear and smash the ball home.

Thwaite then showed what this match meant when he lunged late at Pablo Garcia, which saw both teams come together and earn the Australian a yellow card.

Sterjovski was giving Diogo a torrid time to further emphasise his value to this team since his exploits at the World Cup last year.

While it took some time, Recoba started to impose himself on the match and in the 22nd minute almost set an equaliser for his team. His low, swinging cross was flicked on at the near post, which found Vicente Sanchez who hit the bar with his header, but he was offside in any case.

A lively Holman played himself into a goal scoring position shortly afterwards, but a brilliant tackle by Garcia robbed him as he was about to shoot. While Recoba looked threatening on the break, it was Australia who still controlled the majority of play and but for some poor final passes, could have exposed the Uruguay defence.

Uruguay looked most threatening at set pieces from Recoba and Australia had a warning in the 35th minute when Lugano headed inches wide from a Recoba cross.

Minutes later the scores were level when a quick free kick on the left, found Recoba on the right and his skidding low cross beat three Australian players including Jones, with Forlan gleefully poking home from close range.

Buoyed by the goal, Uruguay almost had the lead at half time, with another dangerous Recoba free kick, headed by Dario Rodriguez, which took a slight deflection off Neill, forcing a good save from Jones.

The second half saw Uruguay up the tempo somewhat, with Australia unable to enjoy the possession they did in the first half.

However chances were few and far between with an Emerton free kick going well wide on the hour mark, the first in anger of the half.

Australia defence had some nervous moments soon after when Rodriguez had a shot deflected over the top of the bar.

Wilkshire showed he was no mug from the dead ball, curling a 25 metre free kick towards the top corner, which Fabian Carini did well to gather.

But three minutes later came the turning point, when Jones's error dropped perfectly for Recoba, who couldn't believe his luck and headed into the empty net.

Substitute Nick Carle provided some spark for Australia and did well on the edge of the 18-yard box to tee up McDonald.

McDonald then had the best chance to equalise, when he was able to go one-on-one on a quick counter. But forced onto his left foot, McDonald's shot from outside of the area, sailed high and wide.

Australia had several chances with free kicks in the dying minutes, but Carini stood tall for Uruguay to keep the home side out and in some ways exact a little revenge for their 2005 World Cup qualifying loss at the same venue 20 months ago.

Coach Graham Arnold was naturally disappointed with the result, but pleased with many aspects of the performance.

"Overall it was a good performance," Arnold told Fox Sports after the game. "The result does leave a sour taste though. Over the 90 minutes, I thought we matched them. The young boys didn't take a backward step and I think it (the performance) showed we are heading down the right path for the future."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
30th. June 2007,			National Stadium, Singapore									45000	
Singapore..0 v. Australia..3													
half time, Singapore..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Lionel Lewis					GK	Mark Schwarzer					
	DF	Mohamed Noh bin Rahman				90	DF	Lucas Neill					
	DF	Aide Iskandar bin Sahak (c)				84	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo		31			54
	DF	Precious Emuejeraye					MF	Jason Culina					
	DF	Daniel Bennett					MF	Luke Wilkshire					87
	MF	Mohammad Shahril bin Ishak					MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		49			
	MF	Fahrudin Mustafić				56	MF	Mile Sterjovski					77
	MF	Shi Jiayi					MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					61
	FW	Muhammad Ridhuan bin Muhammad				67	FW	Brett Emerton					
	FW	Mohammad Khairul Amri bin Mohammad Kamal				75	FW	Mark Viduka		51, 88			90
	FW	Indra Sahdan bin Daud				79	FW	Brett Holman					68
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Mohammad Hafiz bin Osman				90	DF	Michael Beauchamp					54
	DF	Baihakki bin Khaizan				84	DF	Michael Thwaite					87
	FW	Fazrul Nawaz bin Shahul Hameed				67	FW	Nathan Burns					90
	MF	Hariss Harun				56	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					68
	FW	Masrezwan Masturi				75	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle					77
	FW	Ashrin Shariff				79	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell		76			61
							GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones					
							FW	Mark Bridge					
							MF	Carl Valeri					
							GK	Michael Petkovic					
							DF	David Carney					
							DF	Mark Milligan					
Team Coach		Radojko Avramovic					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Masaaki Iemoto (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Nazeer Hussein (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 2		Jeffrey Goh (Singapore)											

match report from Singapore FA

It was not the victory every home fan had wished for, but Singapore's final football match at the National Stadium saw the team present a farewell gift of ambition and hope.

Even in defeat to Australia on Saturday evening by a 3-0 margin that could and should have been much closer, the Lions could leave their dressing room in Kallang proud of an effort that sadly did not have the good fortune to match it.

Statisticians would faithfully record Soccerroos striker Mark Viduka's pair of second-half headers, in-between which Harry Kewell's cool and simple strike was sandwiched.

But at a stadium where Singapore had faced and overcome so many regional adversaries in the past 34 years, the Lions put up a performance fitting enough to echo the spirit of a new sports hub that holds the promise of an even greater future.

No fewer than 45,000 turned up to say their goodbyes to a place that gave them countless memories, many of which featured football clashes against opponents from near neighbours Malaysia.

In recognition of that, stars of years past from both sides of the Causeway strutted their stuff in a curtain-raising friendly that finished in a 1-1 draw, Dollah Salleh scoring a penalty to cancel out R. Suriarumthi's strike as nostalgic cravings were sated once more.

Over the years, though, Singapore have moved on to opponents and aspirations from further afield. Indeed, as captain Aide Iskandar led the Lions in singing Majulah Singapura before kickoff, the mix of emotion and excitement in the stands was palpable.

Any concerns over the players' nerves against a country placed 83 whole spots ahead of them in the FIFA rankings lasted no more than three minutes, when Viduka was bumped off the ball in a fair shoulder-to-shoulder joust with Precious Emuejeraye.

Another five minutes later, Singapore came close to celebrating a shock early lead, when Indra Sahdan skied his connection to a free kick near the right corner flag by Shi Jiayi.

Indra's miss was by no means a rare opportunity, as Ridhuan Muhammad took too long with a chance from just outside the box in the ninth minute and was denied the chance to pull the trigger by an alert Australian defence.

So industrious and determined were Singapore's attackers, in fact, that they kept seeking and finding openings like these against a backline that boasted such English Premiership stars as rightback Brett Emerton, centreback Lucas Neill and goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer.

To be sure, Graham Arnold's side were by no means taking a casual attitude towards this game, and Precious and Daniel Bennett in particular had to be at their defensive best to keep their visitors at bay.

But Lionel Lewis was clearly the less busy of the two custodians in the first half, needing only to put Viduka off a 17th-minute chip and quickly gather a through pass ahead of Brett Holman in the 36th.

In contrast, Schwarzer was frequently summoned into action as the Lions kept punching through the central defensive combination of Neill and Patrick Kisnorbo, who looked uncomfortable as a partnership compared to the hosts' pair of Aide and Precious.

Kisnorbo in particular could thank his lucky stars for not conceding a goal shortly after the half-hour mark, having given away a dangerous free kick for fouling Khairul Amri, who was giving the Leicester City man plenty of trouble with his pace.

Big-occasion man Indra meanwhile repeatedly came close to keeping up his reputation, but Schwarzer foiled him in a one-on-one on 35 minutes, caught a good ranged shot in the 39th and then watched his powerful header hit the crossbar one minute from the break.

Being level at half-time with a team that had played in the World Cup 12 months ago might seem flattering on paper, but such was the Lions' enterprising approach play that, in the eyes of Australian journalists in the press box, they actually deserved better.

Thus, even though Viduka's headed goal in the 52nd minute off a Jason Culina cross was greeted with a sigh of inevitability, many had good reason to believe that the visitors' lead could be cancelled out.

Amri came close to doing that almost immediately, racing on to meet Shi's low cross against all odds, but he could not steer the ball into the net. Moments later, he would be denied again, this time by the foot of a goalpost after turning his defender outside the box.

The Lions then had a penalty appeal waved away by Japanese referee Masaaki Iemoto on the hour, after the extremely hardworking Shi was muscled down in the box while trying to meet Indra's left-sided cross.

Again and again Radojko Avramovic's men looked short on luck, although sometimes it was more a case of simple overexcitement leading to powerful but inaccurate shooting.

The Lions' frustrations in attack were compounded in the 76th minute as Kewell, who had come on as a substitute for Mark Bresciano, nailed the result for the Socceroos with a slow shot so precisely placed that Lewis simply had no hope of reaching for it in time.

Yet, even at 0-2 down, Singapore's attacking ambitions were never truly abandoned, as they kept on going forward in a show of unswerving courage.

But they were ultimately unsuccessful, Shi's 81st-minute curler and Shahril Ishak's headed effort five minutes later both finding no way past an imposing Schwarzer.

In a way, it was perhaps cruel for the Lions not to beat the 34-year-old even once, considering how they had thrown everything at him after repeatedly getting past his defence with unexpected ease.

When Viduka then crept ahead of his marker to nod Kewell's left-sided cross past Lewis and make it 3-0 two minutes from time, one could feel Avramovic's disappointment at facing a final score that untrained observers could read to suggest a gulf in class.

Those who could see beyond the superficiality of scorelines, however, would acknowledge that the difference between the two teams was less than clear, and the hosts had come realistically close to matching their opponents in most if not all areas.

And if they can keep up their rate of growth in recent times, it would be reasonable to suggest that, should the Socceroos be invited to visit Kallang again in 2011, Singapore may well celebrate the opening of its new Sports Hub with a fully deserving victory.

Singapore national coach Radojko Avramovic hailed his team's match against Australia as a positive example of attacking football from both sides, even though the Lions were at the wrong end of a 0-3 final score.

Praising his players for their willingness to go on the attack against the Socceroos, he felt they were 'unlucky' not to score despite creating many chances, but will keep on trying.

"I think it was an excellent open game from both sides, which was good for people to come and see," said the 57-year-old at a post-match press conference. "It was not easy, but we tried very hard and created a few chances. But at the end, it was a case of Australia showing why their squad has 19 players based in Europe, and that was the difference. Maybe there should have been a few more goals from Australia's side and from our side as well, but that's what football is about - creating chances to score goals. We were unlucky not to score any tonight, but next time we will try again."

While the Serbian was pleased with his players' general enthusiasm in attack, he also stressed that they had room for improvement in order to convert that enthusiasm into goals for the team.

"Tonight we played our best attacking game this week, but we had no results!" he commented with a wry smile. "I would have preferred a worse performance with one or two goals. But I think we just didn't have enough patience at one or two moments, making the wrong decision on when to shoot or when not to shoot. Australia showed some good examples of these things, like when (Mark) Viduka gave us problems with his return passes. But we didn't sit back and wait to concede against these World Cup teams, we attacked and tried to score; that's good from the boys. Generally, I can't say that the players did badly. They worked hard for 90 minutes, and I hope this game showed them that they must work harder still towards a better future."

Australia coach Graham Arnold lauded Singapore for a performance that he felt largely matched that from his side, and further opined that Singapore's players have the quality to play in Australia's professional football league.

"My team worked very hard this week and gave the performance I expected, but it was also a great performance from Singapore," he said of the match. "They really tested us and were very unlucky, I must say.

At the end of the first half, it could have easily been 2-0 to Singapore. The players no doubt were thrilled to play against players of the calibre of (Harry) Kewell, Viduka, (Vince) Grella and (Mark) Bresciano.

That should give Singapore, especially their young players, a lot of confidence going forward."

When asked whether any of the Lions had impressed him during the match, Arnold replied without hesitation "All of them!"

"I think the players in this team have what it takes to play A-League quality football. Some clubs in Australia should come up here and have a look, because there's definitely some good quality in here."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
1st. July 2007,			Bishan Stadium, Singapore									1500	
Singapore U-23..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Singapore U-23..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
	GK	Hassan bin Abdullah Sunny						GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones				36
	DF	Baihakki bin Khaizan (c)						DF	David Carney				
								DF	Mark Milligan				
	MF	Mohammad Isa bin Abdul Halim				X		DF	Michael Beauchamp				
								DF	Michael Thwaite				
								MF	Nathan Burns				
								MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
22	MF	Juma'at Jantan						MF	Carl Valeri				
	FW	Goh Swee Swee				X*		FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson (c)				
	FW	Masrezwan Masturi				X**		FW	Bruce Djite				
	FW	Ashrin Shariff				X***		FW	Mark Bridge				
SUBSTITUTES													
	FW	Fazrul Nawaz s/o Shahul Hameed				X		GK	Michael Petkovic				36
	DF	Mohamad Shaiful bin Esah Nain				X*							
	MF	Muhammad Shahril bin Mohamad Alias				X**							
	MF	Erwan Gunawan bin Suherman Abu				X***							
Team Coach		Raddy Avramovic					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from FFA

Australia played out a scoreless draw in a training match last night against Singapore Under 23's at the Bishan Stadium as preparations continue ahead of the Qantas Socceroos historic debut in the AFC Asian Cup next Sunday.

Consisting of two periods of 35 minutes each, the match was intended as a low-key outing for those players who didn't feature heavily in the Qantas Socceroos 3-0 defeat of Singapore in the international played the previous day.

Australia fielded all squads members who didn't start against Singapore, less goalscorer Harry Kewell, the recuperating Tim Cahill, and also John Aloisi who arrives into camp today.

The match was a spirited contest though largely free of goalmouth action qith Qantas Under 23's striker Bruce Djite coming closest to breaking the deadlock, however, his second half effort was disallowed for offside.

Sydney FC's David Carney featured at laft full-back while there were impressive performances from the likes of Nick Carle, Michael Beauchamp, Carl Valeri and youngster Nathan Burns who made his senior debut 24 hours previously.

The Qantas Socceroos will make their AFC Asian Cup debut against Oman on Sunday before completing their Group A fixtures against Iraq on Friday 13 July and co-host Thailand on Monday 16 July.

match report from The Straits Times, 2/7/2007, page 37

Inspired by their seniors the night before, the Young Lions put up a defiant display to hold Australia to a 0-0 draw yesterday.

Yes, the Socceroos fielded a team of second-stringers. Yes, it was little more than a warm-up game that was trimmed to 70 minutes.

But, the sheer industry and desire shown by Singapore's Under-23 side was a joy to behold for the 1,500 spectators who turned up at the Bishan Stadium.

Unfortunately, like the Lions, the Young Lions shunned the scoring opportunities that came their way.

Indeed, it was Australia's Brad Jones who was the busier of the two goalkeepers.

The Middlesbrough reserve stopper was called into action as early as the 10th minute, when he had to palm away a rising shot from Juma'at Jantan.

The best chance of the evening also fell to the nippy midfielder, who was put clean through on goal in the 25th minute.

Although Juma'at's touch took him past Jones, it was too strong.

The No.22 was forced to the bye-line, from where he could only muster a weak cutback that was cleared easily.

Australia's first real chance arrived on the half-hour mark, when Bruce Djite blasted over with Singapore custodian Hassan Sunny at his mercy.

It was also their last meaningful attempt on goal for the rest of the game.

At half-time, Young Lions coach Raddy Avramovic made changes.

Isa Halim, Goh Swee Swee, Masrezwan Masturi and Ashrin Shariff made way for Fazrul Nawaz, Shaiful Esah Nain, Shahril Alias and Erwan Gunawan.

It was Erwan who missed from close range in the 46th minute, after great work on the flanks by Shahril.

Even Hassan tried to break the deadlock. The goalkeeper delighted the fans by stepping up to take a free kick in injury time. But his attempt drifted wide.

Said Avramovic: "It was very similar to Saturday's game, where we created a few chances."

Captain Baihakki Khaizan agreed, but was nonetheless delighted by the draw.

"We were inspired by what the senior team did yesterday," he said. "We had to play smart, because the Aussies had to get used to the heat."

Socceroos coach Graham Arnold did not stay to comment on the result.

He rushed off to the Jurong West Stadium to catch his Asian Cup group rivals Oman in action in a friendly against Saudi Arabia.

Date & Time				Venue				Weather				Temperature		Attendance	
3rd. July 2007,				Singapore											
Australia 'A'..1 v. Australia 'B'..3															
half time, Australia 'A'..0 v. Australia 'B'..0															
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution		
START LIST															
	GK	Mark Schwarzer													
	DF	Lucas Neill													
	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo													
	MF	Jason Culina													
	MF	Luke Wilkshire						DF	Michael Thwaite	X					
	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella						MF	Nathan Burns	X					
	MF	Mile Sterjovski													
	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano													
	FW	Brett Emerton						FW	John Aloisi	X					
	FW	Mark Viduka (c)	X												
	FW	Brett Holman													
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Graham Arnold						
Team Manager							Team Manager								
Referee															
Assistant Referee 1															
Assistant Referee 2															

match report from SBS

Late arrival John Aloisi has wasted little time making an impression on Australia's Asian Cup campaign, scoring one goal and setting up another as a second-string Socceroos side upset the first team 3-1 in a practice match in Singapore on Tuesday night.

Coach Graham Arnold pitted the starting line-up which ran out unconvincing 3-0 winners over Singapore in last weekend's friendly against the rest of the squad in the intra-squad game.

And it may have given him some food for thought ahead of Australia's Asian Cup opener against Oman in Bangkok on Sunday as the "seconds" ran out comfortable winners over the first-choice side.

Striker Aloisi, who only had his first session with the team on Tuesday morning after being given the first week of the Singapore training camp off following the late finish to his Spanish club season, staked his claim for Asian Cup action with his performance.

After scores were deadlocked 0-0 at halftime in the one-hour match, Aloisi set up youngster Nathan Burns to score the opener.

Aloisi and Michael Thwaite also scored for the second-string side, with skipper Mark Viduka netting his side's lone goal.

Aloisi is hoping Arnold decides to try two strikers up front at various points during the tournament, which would give him a fighting chance of starting alongside Viduka.

Much for Aloisi will depend on whether Arnold decides to start Harry Kewell in a withdrawn role behind Viduka in the group matches as he has flagged.

If Arnold decides to go for a traditional two-pronged strikeforce, Aloisi and Archie Thompson will be vying for the chance to play alongside their captain.

Aloisi doesn't believe his late start to the camp - his teammates have been acclimatising for the past 10 days - will hinder his chances of selection.

"For me it was very important to see my family (in Adelaide) - the last time I properly went home was about three years ago," Aloisi said. "I spoke to Arnie a few weeks ago and he was mentioning maybe against these sides we might have to go to two up front to break them down because they're going to try and shut us down. Two strikers would make things a lot more difficult, like we did against Japan in the World Cup."

There were two minor injury concerns arising from Tuesday night's match, with Viduka receiving attention to a groin knock and midfielder Mark Bresciano coming off early with a foot injury. But neither is expected to miss any training as a result and should be available for the Oman match.

The Socceroos leave Singapore for Bangkok today (AEST).

Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
8th. July 2007, 17.20			Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok, Thailand				Hot and humid					5000	
Oman..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Oman..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
26	GK	Ali Abdullah Harib Al-Habsi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Mohammed Rabia Jamaan Al-Noobi (c)		33			2	DF	Lucas Neill				
3	DF	Juma Abdulla Al-Wahaibi		55			3	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				78
4	DF	Said Suwailim Al-Shoon					7	DF	Brett Emerton		18		
11	DF	Yousuf Shaaban Al-Busaidi		52		65	5	MF	Jason Culina				
17	DF	Hassan Yousuf Mudhafar Al-Gheilani				80	8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
12	MF	Ahmed Mubarak Obaid Al-Mahajri		21			13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				62
21	MF	Ahmed Hadid Thuwaini Al-Mukhaini					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				46
8	FW	Badar Mubarak Saleh Al-Maimani	31			60	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
15	FW	Ismail Sulaiman Ashoor Al-Ajmi					9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				
20	FW	Amad Ali Suleiman Al-Hosni					10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Sulaiman Khamis Humaid Al-Mazroui					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	91	89		62
5	DF	Fahad Nasib Saleem Ba-Masilah					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
6	DF	Issam Fayel Al-Sinani					11	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
7	MF	Sultan Mohammed Said Al-Touqi					12	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones				
9	FW	Hashim Saleh Mohammed Al-Balushi					14	FW	Brett Holman				78
10	MF	Fawzi Bashir Rajab Bait Doorbeen				60	15	FW	John Aloisi				46
13	MF	Mohammed Saleh Abdullah Al-Ghassani				65	16	DF	Michael Thwaite				
14	FW	Younis Khalifa Al-Mushaifri					17	MF	Carl Valeri				
18	DF	Hamed Hamdan Al-Bulushi					18	GK	Michael Petkovic				
24	MF	Younis Mubarak Al-Mahajri				80	19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
25	DF	Sulaiman Said Al-Shukailli					20	MF	David Carney				
28	MF	Hussain Ali Farah Al-Hadhri					22	DF	Mark Milligan				
Team Coach		Gabriel Calderon					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager		Juma Al-Kaabi					Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Eddy Maillet (Seychelles)											
Assistant Referee 1		Celestin Ntagungira (Rwanda)											
Assistant Referee 2		Evarist Menkouande (Cameroon)											

match report from AFC

Oman were denied the first shock of the AFC Asian Cup 2007 when substitute Tim Cahill scored an injury-time equaliser as pre-tournament favourites Australia drew 1-1 with the Gulf Sultanate at the Rajamangala Stadium on Sunday.

The result mirrored Saturday's result between Group A hosts Thailand and Iraq, leaving all four teams level on points and goal difference after the first round of matches.

Badar Mubarak looked to be the hero for Oman when he opened the scoring in the 32nd minute and just as it was looking as though Australia's competition debut would end in defeat, the Everton midfielder continued his knack of scoring vital goals for his country when he levelled the tie right at the death.

It was rough justice on the lively Omanis but the four minutes of injury time were always a possibility as their frustrating time-wasting tactics came back to haunt them.

The opening 10 minutes of the match was a scrappy affair with neither side creating any clear cut chances until Ismail Ali, Oman's top scorer in qualifying with four goals, headed Yousuf Sha'ban's corner over the bar.

Oman again came close to breaking the deadlock five minutes later when Sha'ban dived into the six-yard box in a desperate attempt to get his head on the end of an Ahmed Hadid free-kick swung in from the left.

The Socceroos seemed to be labouring in the Bangkok humidity and shortly after Brett Emerton had become the first player to enter Seychellois referee Eddy Maillet's book Australia mustered their clearest effort at goal.

Harry Kewell, who had earlier attempted to win a penalty by falling to the ground under minimal contact from defender Hassan Yousuf Madhafar, was perfectly placed in the apex of the six-yard-box to hammer home Luke Wilkshire's 20th minute free-kick but the injury-prone Liverpool attacker took his eye off the ball and knocked it across goal instead of into the back of the net.

The Gulf side, playing in only their second Asian Cup finals, took the lead in the 32nd minute when Imad Ali picked up possession on the left side deep into Australian territory.

The Qatar Sports Club forward, who scored three times in Oman's debut Asian Cup campaign, tried to set up Ismail Al Ajmi but while he failed to connect with pass the ball landed fortuitously into the path of

Badar Mubarak whose low shot had too much purchase for Mark Schwarzer to keep out.

Australia had the chance to hit back immediately but recently-signed Newcastle United striker Mark Viduka swept a free-kick high and wide before Oman goalkeeper Ali Al Habsi was out sharply to deny Mark Bresciano, after the Palermo midfielder had superbly controlled the ball to set up the 41st minute chance.

Three minutes after the restart Oman almost doubled their lead when Ahmed Mubarak cleverly created space for a low shot from just outside the area, but Schwarzer got down well to push the ball to safety.

The Middlesbrough keeper again came to his side's rescue in the 70th minute with a timely one-handed save from Imad Ali's header following a move that started with Oman keeper Ali Al Habsi punching clear a Wilkshire corner.

With 13 minutes left to play Schwarzer was again the saviour for Australia with a smart block from Fawzi Basheer, although the midfield dynamo, who came on for goal scorer Badar Mubarak on the hour mark, should have put the game beyond any doubt.

Oman were punished for the profligacy and their numerous unnecessary injury stoppages when Cahill fired home the rebound after Al Habsi could only parry Bresciano's shot back to the feet of the former Samoa youth international, who was only cleared to play for Australia in 2004.

Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
13th. July 2007, 17.20			Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok, Thailand			Hot and humid			29C		6000		
Iraq..3 v. Australia..1													
half time, Iraq..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
22	GK	Noor Sabri Abbas Hasan					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Jassim Mohammed Ghulam Al-Hamd					2	DF	Lucas Neill		42	90+3	
3	DF	Bassim Abbas Gatea Al-Ogaili					3	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				71
14	DF	Haidar Abdul-Amir Hussain					7	DF	Brett Emerton				
15	DF	Ali Hussein Rehema Al-Mutairi					5	MF	Jason Culina		12		64
5	MF	Nashat Akram Abid Ali	22				8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
6	MF	Salih Sadir Salih Al-Sadoun				49	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		35		
11	MF	Hawar Mulla Mohammed Taher Zebari	60				23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
18	MF	Mahdi Karim Ajeel					9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)	47			
19	MF	Haitham Kadhim Tahir		62		74	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
10	FW	Younes Mahmoud Khalaf (c)				91	14	FW	Brett Holman				46
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Ahmad Ali Jaber					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				46
4	DF	Khaldoun Ibrahim Mohammed Albu-Mohammed					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
7	MF	Ali Abbas Mshehed Al-Hifi					11	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				64
8	MF	Ahmad Abid Ali Mohammed		89			12	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones				
9	FW	Mohammad Nasser Shakroun				91	15	FW	John Aloisi				71
12	DF	Haiedar Abdul-Razzaq Hassan					16	DF	Michael Thwaite				
13	MF	Karrar Jassim Mohammed Al-Mahmoudi	86			74	17	MF	Carl Valeri				
17	FW	Luay Salah Hassan Al-Khafaji					18	GK	Michael Petkovic				
20	MF	Nabeel Abbas Lafta					19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
23	GK	Mohammed Gassid Kadhim Al-Jaberi					20	MF	David Carney				
24	MF	Qusay Muneer Abboodi Al-Hussein		81		49	21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
							22	DF	Mark Milligan				
Team Coach		Jorvan Vieira					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Jasim Karim (Bahrain)											
Assistant Referee 1		Awni Hassouneh (Jordan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Hae Sang Jeong (Korea Republic)											

match report from AFC

Man of the match Nashat Akram scored one and set up another as Iraq stunned Australia 3-1 at the Rajamangala Stadium on Friday to keep on track for a quarter-final appearance for the fourth successive tournament. The Al Shabab midfielder, who has been linked with a move to English Premiership side Sunderland, opened the scoring with a 23rd minute free-kick before setting up Hawar Mulla Mohammed on the hour mark after skipper Mark Viduka had equalised for Australia with a header two minutes after the interval.

Australia's miserable night ended when substitute Karrar Jassim scored from close range following a defensive error from Lucas Neill, who was sent off late in the game after picking up a second yellow card for dissent. Iraq need only a draw in their final Group A game against Oman to advance to the last eight, while the Socceroos, who were considered one of the pre-tournament favourites, must beat co-hosts Thailand to stay alive in the competition.

Iraq coach Jorvan Vieira named an unchanged side from the one that started the 1-1 draw with hosts Thailand while the Brazilian's counterpart Graham Arnold made one alteration from the starting 11 against Oman, as forward Brett Hollman came in for midfielder Mile Sterjovski.

With Group A hosts Thailand defeating Oman 2-0 on Thursday the pressure was on both sides to get the win and it was the Australians, with Hollman supporting skipper Mark Viduka up front, that had the first chance of the match.

Harry Kewell picked up possession on the left flank and swung in a cross towards Mark Bresciano but the Palermo midfielder, who scored in Australia's 2-1 win over Iraq back in March 2005, failed to connect properly with the Liverpool man's third minute pass.

Seven minutes later it was Iraq's turn to attack, with captain Younis Mahmoud skilfully turning Brett Emerton before seeing his powerful shot turned out for a corner by Aussie keeper Mark Schwarzer.

Free-kicks from Bresciano and Hawar Mulla Mohammed were both struck directly at Noor Sabri and Schwarzer respectively before a set-piece gave Iraq a 23rd minute lead.

Vince Grella was penalised for dangerous play after kicking Hawar in the head giving Iraq a free-kick, which was whipped directly into the net by Nashat Akram as Schwarzer was put off by the run of Saleh Sadir who was credited with the goal but didn't appear to get the final touch.

The first-half was punctuated with numerous fouls and after Bresciano was lucky to escape a caution for lashing out while being held back by Bassim Abbas, Viduka shot inches wide following a 31st minute free-kick. Australia were becoming increasingly frustrated and Vince Grella, who had been needlessly booked in the 35th minute for dissent, was lucky to stay on the pitch after pushing Younis Mahmoud to the ground.

Australia's misery could have been compounded when a howler from Patrick Kisnorbo gave possession to Younis Mahmoud who squared the ball to Saleh Sadir in the penalty box.

But the Al Ansar midfielder was denied a shot at goal following a superb tackle by Luke Wilkshire.

Australia hit back two minutes after the interval when Bresciano fed the ball to Emerton whose cross from the right was headed home by Viduka.

To make matters worse for Iraq, Saleh Sadir had to leave the field before they restarted the match with what looked to be a re-occurrence of a knee injury sustained during the WAFF Championship in July.

Australia were in total control but Iraq regained the lead on the hour mark when the Nashat's sublime pass set Hawar clear on goal and the Al Ain striker deftly flicked the ball past the advancing Schwarzer.

Iraq should have made it three two minutes later when the superb Nashat weaved his way through the Australian rear guard and slipped the ball to Haider Abdull Amer but the defender blazed the ball wastefully over the bar.

Nashat was pulling the creative strings in midfield and started the move that led to Hawar almost beating Schwarzer with the deftest of chips but not for the first time in the tournament the Middlesbrough number one rescued his side, palming the 24-year-old's 75th minute effort onto the crossbar.

Australia's miserable night was complete when Iraq added a third with four minutes from time when Lucas Neill's poor clearance fell to the feet of Younis Mahmoud.

The Iraq skipper's shot came off the heel of the West Ham United defender and into the path of Karrar Jassim, who tapped the ball into an unguarded net.

Neill's personal nightmare didn't end there when he picked up his second yellow card, both of which were for dissent, meaning he will miss out on the Socceroos must-win match against hosts Thailand.

Asian Cup Finals, 1st. Round													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
16th. July 2007, 19.35			Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok, Thailand				Hot and rainy			29C		46000	
Thailand..0 v. Australia..4													
half time, Thailand..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Sinthaweechai "Kosin" Hathairattanakool					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Suree Sukha					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp	20			
5	DF	Niweat Siritwong					7	DF	Brett Emerton				
6	DF	Nataporn Phanrit					22	DF	Mark Milligan				
12	DF	Nirut Surasiang		45+2			5	MF	Jason Culina				
16	DF	Kiatprawut Saiwao				56	8	MF	Luke Wilkshire		84		
10	MF	Tawan Sripan					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
8	FW	Suchao Nutnum					20	MF	David Carney				
13	FW	Kiatikus Senamuang					23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				74
14	FW	Teeratep Winothai				60	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)	80, 83			84
17	FW	Sutee Suksomkit				54	15	FW	John Aloisi		28		61
SUBSTITUTES													
3	DF	Patiparn Phetphun					3	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
4	DF	Jetsada Jitsawad				56	4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				74
7	MF	Datsakorn Thonglao		73		54	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell	90			61
9	MF	Therdsak Chaiman					11	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
19	MF	Pichitphong Choeichiu					12	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones				
20	DF	Hadtaporn Suwan					14	FW	Brett Holman				84
21	FW	Teerasil Dangda					16	DF	Michael Thwaite				
22	GK	Narit Taweekul					17	MF	Carl Valeri				
23	FW	Pipat Thonkanya				60	18	GK	Michael Petkovic				
24	FW	Apichet Puttan					19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
28	DF	Natthaphong Samana					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
Team Coach		Chanvit Phalajivin					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager		Na-Ranong Kittiratt					Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Jong Chul Kwon (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hae Sang Jeong (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 2		Yew Mun Tang (Singapore)											

match report from AFC

Mark Viduka scored twice in the final 10 minutes to seal a 4-0 win for Australia over Thailand and earn the Socceroos a place in the quarter-finals of the AFC Asian Cup.

The result flattered Graham Arnold's team after Thailand dominated the second half and had the chances to pull level after Michael Beauchamp had given the Australians the lead with a 21st minute header.

But it was Australia's aerial prowess that won them the game with Viduka holding off the Thai defence to score the goal that effectively won the game 10 minutes from time before sealing the result with a header three minutes later.

Harry Kewell then completed the win when he slotted past Kosin Hathairatanakul in injury time.

Graham Arnold made four changes from the team that lost 3-1 to Iraq, with Kewell axed along with Patrick Kisnorbo and Brett Holman while Lucas Neill missed the game due to suspension.

As a result, Beauchamp and John Aloisi started, as did Sydney FC duo Mark Milligan and David Carney, and the Australians looked the better for the changes.

With the rain falling incessantly throughout the first 45 minutes, the Socceroos started the game at a higher tempo than they have in their previous two games and they dominated the early stages of the game.

It took the Australians 21 minutes to put themselves on the scoreboard when Luke Wilkshire sent his free kick into the Thai penalty area and Beauchamp was left unmarked to head past Kosin.

Suchao Nutnum could have responded just two minutes later for the Thais only for his long-range shot to fly straight at Mark Schwarzer while moments later Suree Sukha sent in a searing low cross that Kiatikus

Senamuang only just failed to direct into the Australian goal.

Needing a draw to progress to the knockout phase, the Thais pushed for the equaliser and dominated the second period, although Wilkshire went close to adding a second just seconds after the restart.

Suree continued to cause problems down the right for Thailand while Tawan Sripan and Kiatikus worked tirelessly in attack, and it was the former Huddersfield Town man who set up substitute Pipat Thonkanya with a back-heel into the area, only for Pipat to shoot straight at Schwarzer.

Kewell came off the bench and headed over the bar in the 68th minute before another long range effort from Suchao blistered the paint of Schwarzer's left post. Datsakorn Thonglao tried his luck from distance soon after, only for the Middlesbrough goalkeeper to hold onto the shot.

With 10 minutes remaining and with the Thais pushing hard for the equaliser, Viduka killed off the game.

His first came when Tim Cahill sent in his cross from the left and Viduka controlled the ball on his chest before holding off the Thai defence and firing past Kosin.

Three minutes later Cahill and Viduka linked up again, with the Everton man crossing from the left this time to allow the powerfully built striker to head home.

And Kewell completed the scoring right at the end when he ran in unopposed on Kosin before sliding the ball to the right of the keeper.

Asian Cup Finals, Quarter Final													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
21st. July 2007, 17.20			My Dinh Stadium, Hanoi, Vietnam				Hot and humid			34C		25000	
Japan..1 v. Australia..1 after extra time													
half time, Japan..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Yuichi Komano					2	DF	Lucas Neill				
21	DF	Akira Kaji				88	6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
22	DF	Yuji Nakazawa					7	DF	Brett Emerton				
6	MF	Yuki Abe		95			22	DF	Mark Milligan				
7	MF	Yasuhito Endo					5	MF	Jason Culina				
10	MF	Shunsuke Nakamura					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella			75	
13	MF	Keita Suzuki					20	MF	David Carney		81		
14	MF	Kengo Nakamura				115	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				71
12	FW	Seiichiro Maki				102	9	FW	Mark Viduka (c)				61
19	FW	Naohiro Takahara	72				15	FW	John Aloisi	69	33		82
SUBSTITUTES													
2	MF	Yasuyuki Konno				88	3	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
5	DF	Keisuke Tsuboi					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				71
8	MF	Naotake Hanyu					10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell		65		61
9	MF	Satoru Yamagishi					11	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
11	FW	Hisato Sato				102	12	GK	Bradley "Brad" Jones				
15	MF	Koki Mizuno					14	FW	Brett Holman				
18	GK	Seigo Narazaki					16	DF	Michael Thwaite				
20	FW	Kisho Yano				115	17	MF	Carl Valeri				
23	GK	Eiji Kawashima					18	GK	Michael Petkovic				
24	MF	Hideo Hashimoto					19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				82
28	MF	Yoshiaki Ohta					21	MF	Mile Sterjovski				
29	MF	Masahiko Inoha											
Team Coach		Ivan Osim					Team Coach		Graham Arnold				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Saad Kameel Al-Fadhli (Kuwait)											
Assistant Referee 1		Abdullah Salim Khalfan Al-Amouri (Oman)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mohammad Kadom Arab (Iraq)											
PENALTY SHOOT-OUT													
Japan..4 v. Australia..3													
10		Shunsuke Nakamura	X				10		Harold "Harry" Kewell	missed			
7		Yasuhito Endo	X				2		Lucas Neill	missed			
3		Yuichi Komano	X				4		Timothy "Tim" Cahill	X			
19		Naohiro Takahara	missed				19		Nicholas "Nick" Carle	X			
22		Yuji Nakazawa	X				20		David Carney	X			

match report from AFC

Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi was the hero for defending champions Japan as they eliminated Australia 4-3 in a penalty shootout to progress to the semi-finals of the AFC Asian Cup.

Kawaguchi saved from both Harry Kewell and Lucas Neill as Japan's quest for a third successive Asian Cup title stayed alive with Yuji Nakazawa scored the winning penalty emphatically past Mark Schwarzer.

The Japanese rekindled memories of their last appearance in the quarter-finals of the Asian Cup, when they knocked out Jordan in similar fashion before going on to win the title. Ivica Osim's side will now take on either Saudi Arabia or Uzbekistan in the semi-final next Wednesday in Hanoi.

It was a brave performance, though, from the Australians who played the entire extra-time period with just 10 men after Vince Grella was sent off 14 minutes from the end of normal time.

The score at that stage was 1-1 after John Aloisi's 70th minute opener was cancelled out less than two minutes later when Naohiro Takahara struck from close range.

Aloisi scored for the Socceroos with just 20 minutes to go when he pushed home a corner from substitute Kewell after the ball had somehow managed to cross the six-yard box untouched.

But Australia's lead lasted less than two minutes when Takahara capitalised on Mark Milligan's miss-hit clearance before turning and firing past Schwarzer, via the goalkeeper's right post.

Japan's hopes of progressing improved further as time was running out when referee Kuwaiti Saad Khameel Al Fadhl sent midfielder Grella off when he hit Takahara in the face with a flailing arm as both went up for a header, but Osim's team were unable to take full advantage.

Not surprisingly, the champions controlled possession but they lacked the creativity to breach the tightly packed Australian defence.

The game went into extra-time but the Australians put up a dogged defence and successfully kept the Japanese at bay, even though there was a scare for the Socceroos with just seconds remaining.

A lofted cross into the penalty area was met by Shunsuke Nakamura's flying volley, but Schwarzer's reflex save to his right kept the ball out and took the game into a penalty shootout.

Kawaguchi guessed correctly to deny Kewell and Neill while Nakamura and Yasuhito Endo converted successfully before Tim Cahill put Australia on the board.

Yuichi Komano made it 3-1 and Nicky Carle kept Australia alive with his spot kick. The pressure increased on Japan when Takahara put his effort over the bar and when David Carney scored that left Nakazawa to go head-to-head with Schwarzer.

The veteran defender, however, was equal to the task to send Japan into the semi-finals once again.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
11th. September 2007,			Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Victoria									70171	
Australia..0 v. Argentina..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. Argentina..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					13	GK	Roberto Abbondanzieri				
2	DF	Lucas Neill					2	DF	Martin Demichelis	49			
4	MF	David Carney					6	DF	Gabriel Heinze		53		
5	MF	Jason Culina					8	MF	Javier Zanetti				
6	DF	Michael Beauchamp					11	FW	Carlos Tevez				84
7	MF	Luke Wilshire					14	MF	Javier Mascherano				
8	MF	Josip Skoko				51	15	DF	Gabriel Milito				
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				82	17	DF	Nicolas Burdisso				
11	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				62	18	MF	Jonas Gutierrez				72
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		87			19	FW	Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini				90+1
23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				58	20	MF	Federico Insua				80
SUBSTITUTES													
17	MF	Carl Valeri				51	7	FW	Javier Pedro Saviola Fernández				84
22	FW	Nikola "Nik" Mrdja				82	5	MF	Fernando Gago				72
19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				62	9	FW	Sergio Agüero				90+1
10	FW	Brett Holman		60		58	16	MF	Cristian Ledesma				80
	GK	Clint Bolton						GK	Oscar Ustari				
	FW	Alex Brosque						GK	Sergio Romero				
	DF	Simon Colosimo						DF	Daniel "Cata" Díaz				
	DF	Dean Heffernan						DF	Fabrizio Coloccini				
	FW	Scott McDonald						MF	Maximiliano "Maxi" Rodriguez				
	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo						FW	Hernán Crespo				
	DF	Michael Thwaite											
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Alfio Basile				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Mike Dean (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Ben Wilson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Nathan Gibson (Australia)											

match report from SBS

Argentina has overcome a determined effort from the hosts to win its friendly against the Socceroos 1-0 in front of a crowd of over 70,000 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The world's No.2-ranked team lived up to its reputation, producing an excellent display of football, which probably deserved more than the one goal as its reward.

Argentine superstars Carlos Tevez and Lionel Messi played a major role, entertaining the crowd of 70,171 and tormenting the Australian defenders.

Defender Martin Demichelis scored the decisive goal in the 49th minute, thanks to Tevez winning the free kick and Messi delivering a pin-point cross from the right.

The Socceroos were also excellent, with the woodwork denying Mark Bresciano in the first half.

David Carney was a menace at both ends of the ground, while Josh Kennedy showed enough to affirm his reputation as the key attacking weapon of the future.

Archie Thompson created the first opening for the locals, deceiving his opponent before being brought down by Gabriel Milito just outside the box.

From the resultant free kick, the ball rebounded its way to an unattended Bresciano. His shot forced a desperate clearance from Demichelis, which fortunately found the Argentine keeper Roberto Abbondanzieri rather than the back of the net.

Kennedy was proving a handful for the Argentine defence, and in the 11th minute, the tall striker headed over the bar from a corner.

Messi was causing headaches as well, dashing clear on goal, only for Carney to intervene with a superb tackle.

From the corner, Nicolas Burdisso deflected the ball over, when it seemed just as easy to tap into the net.

Messi again created his own space when shackled by Vincenzo Grella and Carney on 16 minutes, but his 25-yard shot was defied by the left upright.

It was an intriguing mix of styles, as Australia crashed forward while the Argentines passed their way up and down the pitch.

It was producing an attractive game as well, and Australia could have had the lead in the 25th minute when Bresciano's 30m free kick hit the bar, rebounded off Abbondanzieri's head, back off the bar, off the keeper again and out for a corner.

Despite Messi's influence, the Aussies refused to drop the tempo of the match, and on their next attack the ball fell to Lucas Neill from a corner, but he shot high and wide.

Somehow, the half ended scoreless, but it was not for want of trying, especially from Messi, and the MCG crowd cheered both sides as they headed to the break.

Tevez's influence on the game grew early in the second half and he won the free kick which resulted in the opening goal.

From the set piece, Messi delivered to an unmarked Demichelis, who steered the ball past Schwarzer off the left-hand post and into the net.

Josip Skoko bid farewell to Australian international football, replaced by Carl Valeri soon after and then Carney almost produced an equaliser with an audacious chip which had Abbondanzieri back peddling and tipping over the bar.

Another excellent Bresciano free kick produced a similar effort from the Argentine custodian soon after.

The Palermo midfielder departed with Brett Holman on and Nick Carle replaced Thompson as Graharn Arnold pressed for an equaliser.

But it was the visitors who looked more likely to score, with Messi denied a penalty appeal in the 59th minute.

Schwarzer was called on to charge out of his box and hack the ball to safety with two Argentine players bearing down on him. Up the other end, Carle almost put Kennedy through with a clever ball, which was cut off by Abbondanzieri.

The Socceroos' endeavour to find an equaliser certainly couldn't be questioned, but each time they looked to break down the defence, the visitors had an answer.

Nik Mrdja replaced Kennedy in the final ten minutes.

A collision between Schwarzer and Messi produced some nervous moments for both teams late on, but both recovered, while Alfio Basile decided he would not risk Tevez any longer removed him for Javier Saviola.

Grella then crashed into Javier Mascherano, causing some friction between the teams and the Aussie defensive midfielder was booked.

But the friendly nature of the match held until the end, with the better side getting the win, but with plenty of heartening signs for the Australians in Arnold's final game in charge.

Argentina completed its build-up to the start of its World Cup qualifying campaign, which gets under way against Chile on October 13.

Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature			Attendance		
17th. November 2007,			Loftus Road Stadium, London, England									11953		
Nigeria..0 v. Australia..1														
half time, Nigeria..0 v. Australia..0														
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	
START LIST														
	GK	Bamidele Mathew "Dele" Aiyenugba					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					
	DF	Rabiu Afolabi						DF	Lucas Neill					
	DF	Daniel Olusola "Danny" Shittu						DF	Michael Beauchamp					
	DF	Ifeanyi Innocent Emeghara						DF	Scott Chipperfield				46	
	MF	Richard Eromogbe						MF	Brett Emerton					
	MF	Dickson Paul Etuhu						MF	Carl Valeri					
	MF	Onyekachi Donatus "Tico" Okonkwo				72		MF	Luke Wilkshire					
	MF	Atanda Ayila Yussuf						MF	David Carney	52				
	FW	Obafemi Akinwunmi Martins						MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle					
	FW	Peter Osaze Odemwingie				63		FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell					
	FW	Stephen Ayodele Makinwa						FW	Scott McDonald					
SUBSTITUTES														
	DF	Taye Ismaila Taiwo				72		MF	Jacob Burns				46	
	FW	Ikechukwu Uche				63		MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					
								GK	Nathan Coe					
								GK	Adam Federici					
								FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy					
								DF	Patrick Kisnorbo					
								MF	Mile Sterjovski					
								DF	Michael Thwaite					
								MF	James Wesolowski					
Team Coach		Berti Vogts					Team Coach		Robert Baan					
Team Manager							Team Manager							
Referee		Mark Clattenburg (England)												
Assistant Referee 1														
Assistant Referee 2														

match report from FFA

A magnificent goal from David Carney has earned Australia a 1-0 win over Nigeria at Craven Cottage in London.

The Sheffield United midfielder's 52nd minute strike continued his amazing rise with the national team and was again one of Australia's best in the well deserved win.

Despite the disruption's in the lead up to the match, Australia's new look side played extremely well and again outlined the depth in the Qantas Socceroo squad.

Carney's goal was a worthy winner of any game, picking up the ball 25 metres out, taking one touch and unleashing a swerving shot that gave Nigerian keeper Aiyenugba no chance.

"It set up nicely and I just whacked and thankfully it went in," said Carney.

The match almost opened sensationally for Australia, when McDonald was presented with a great chance to open the scoring in the 3rd minute. However his header from Carney's cross went wide with the goal open.

Kewell who was superb throughout the first half, showed his class in the 15th with a superb turn 25 metres out, but his shot went over the bar.

Emerton then saw a free kick turned away for a corner by Nigerian keeper Aiyenugba and then minutes later Kewell and McDonald were both thwarted by the keeper.

But while Australia was dominating, Nigeria often produced its moments of inspiration and had the better of the opportunities in the last 20 minutes.

Schwarzer made a world class save when he appeared wrong-footed after a shot deflected of Neill, but the Middlesbrough keeper somehow twisted his body and tipped the ball onto the top of the crossbar.

Carle was then denied by a first class save by Aiyenugba, while Luke Wilkshire was just wide to a shot from the edge of the box.

The last five minutes of the half belonged to Nigeria however and Schwarzer made two good saves.

Australia continued to dominate in the second half and Carney moving back into the left full back role in the second half was superb, while the midfield of Nick Carle, Carl Valeri and Harry Kewell in the hole were

inventive and creating problems for the Nigerian defence.

Nigeria had its moments on the counter-attack, with one chance hitting the post, although Uche was offside in any case.

2008

Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
8th January 2008,			Marconi Oval, Bossley Park, Sydney, New South Wales										
Australia U-23..2 v. Australia..1													
half time,													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
		Matt Blake Simon	X						Archibald "Archie" Thompson	X			
		Ruben Zadkovich	X										
SUBSTITUTES													
Team Coach		Graham Arnold					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													
Squad List							Squad List						
		Nigel Boogaard (Central Coast Mariners)								John Aloisi (Central Coast Mariners)			
		Mark Bridge (Newcastle Jets)								Clint Bolton (Sydney FC)			
		Leigh Broxham (Melbourne Victory)								Alex Brosque (Sydney FC)			
		Robert Cornthwaite (Adelaide United)								Simon Colosimo (Perth Glory)			
		Buce Djite (Adelaide United)								Steve Corica (Sydney FC)			
		Robbie Kruse (Queensland Roar)								Ante Covic (Newcastle Jets)			
		Mark Milligan (Sydney FC)								Jamie Coyne (Perth Glory)			
		Stuart Musialik (Newcastle Jets)								Travis Dodd (Adelaide United)			
		Kristian Sarkies (Adelaide United)								Andrew Durante (Newcastle Jets)			
		Nikolai Topor-Stanley (Perth Glory)								Adam Griffiths (Newcastle Jets)			
	Goalkeeper	Tando Velaphi (Perth Glory)								Joel Griffiths (Newcastle Jets)			
		Danny Vukovic (Central Coast Mariners)								John Hutchinson (Central Coast Mariners)			
		Nick Ward (Melbourne Victory)								Matt McKay (Queensland Roar)			
		Ruben Zadkovich (Sydney FC)								Kevin Muscat (Melbourne Victory)			
		Michael Zullo (Queensland Roar)								Jade North (Newcastle Jets)			
										Lucas Pantelis (Adelaide United)			
										Tom Pondeljak (Central Coast Mariners)			
										Ufuk Talay (Sydney FC)			
										Archie Thompson (Melbourne Victory)			
										Matt Thompson (Newcastle Jets)			
										Rodrigo Vargas (Melbourne Victory)			
										Alex Wilkinson (Central Coast Mariners)			

match report an extract from a FFA article

Qantas Socceroos Pim Verbeek had his first look, up close and personal with his players from the Hyundai A-League and has learnt a lot from the two days in camp.

The camp, held at Marconi Stadium in Sydney, is the first of three being held in preparation for the first match of the 2010 World Cup qualifying tournament against Qatar on February 6 in Melbourne.

Verbeek also got to see the Qantas Under 23's for the first time and featured them in a training game against two separate teams of Qantas Socceroos players, with the Under 23's coming out on top with a 2-1 win.

For the Dutchman, the result of the training game was insignificant, as the most important thing, was it gave him an opportunity to see over 30 players in action, both on and off the field.

"No, because it's a test; training, it's not about results," he said, when asked if he was worried by the result. "Of course, I looked at the way they (23's) scored their goals, the chances we created or not created; that's all part of what I am doing here. The score is not so important to me."

Verbeek also said that he has no intention of having a warm-up game prior to Qatar, believing this will hinder valuable training and preparation time, although a training game, similar to today's is not out of the question.

He also didn't rule out calling more players in for a look in the following camps, while several players from the Under 23's certainly put their hand up with strong performances in the training match.

Well-taken goals from Matt Simon and Ruben Zadkovich gave the Olyroos a healthy cushion before Archie Thompson pulled one back for the Socceroos.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
2nd. February 2008,			Telstra Dome (Docklands Stadium), Melbourne, Victoria									No public access	
Melbourne Victory..1 v. Australia..1													
half time, Melbourne Victory..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
30	GK	Mitchell Langerak											
3	DF	Daniel Piorkowski						DF	Rodrigo Vargas				
								DF	Kevin Muscat				
								DF	Michael Thwaite				
18		Leigh Broxham						MF	James Troisi				
14		Adrian Caceres	5										
21		Sebastian Ryall						FW	John Aloisi				46
								FW	Alex Brosque				
									Joel Griffiths				46*
19		Evan Berger											
SUBSTITUTES													
									Archibald "Archie" Thompson	72			46
Team Coach								Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek			
Team Manager								Team Manager					
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													
Squad List		Goalkeepers	Michael Theoklitos (c)				1	Squad List					
			Mitchell Langerak				30						
			Daniel Piorkowski				3						
			Steve Pantelidis				6						
			Matthew Kemp				7						
			Danny Allsopp				9						
			Kaz Patafta				13						
			Adrian Caceres				14						
			Leandro Love				15						
			Daniel Vasilevski				17						
			Leigh Broxham				18						
			Evan Berger				19						
			Sebastian Ryall				21						
			Nathan Elasi				23						
			Semi Sivic				25						
			Steve Hatzikostas				26						
			Fabio Dilizia				27						

match report from FFA

Melbourne Victory continued its preparations for the AFC Champions League 2008, playing out a 1-1 draw against the Qantas Socceroos in a training match behind closed doors at Telstra Dome this afternoon.

Victory, without star trio Kevin Muscat, Archie Thompson and Rodrigo Vargas, took the lead through Adrian Caceres early in the first half before Thompson equalised against his Victory teammates on 72 minutes.

Muscat, Thompson and Vargas are all vying for a place in Australia's squad ahead of its 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Qatar this Wednesday and did their chances no harm with notable performances.

Caceres was also impressive, converting a pinpoint cross in the fifth minute from Evan Berger, who was a standout alongside fellow youngsters Sebastian Ryall and Leigh Broxham.

Thompson swooped on a defensive lapse by Daniel Piorkowski, who made his first appearance since injuring his shoulder 15 weeks ago, gathering possession of the ball and placing it past Victory goalkeeper Mitchell Langerak.

The match was played with unlimited substitutions, allowing Victory to utilise a number of youngsters including recent signing Nathan Elasi, Football Team Assistant Semi Sivic and Victorian Institute of Sport players Steve Hatzikostas and Fabio Dilizia.

Victory will take on Korean FA Cup winners the Chunnam Dragons in its historic first AFC Champions League match at Telstra Dome on Wednesday, 12 March (kick off 7:30pm).

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
6th. February 2008, 19.30			Telstra Dome (Docklands Stadium), Melbourne, Victoria				Very good			24C		50969	
Australia..3 v. Qatar..0													
half time, Australia..3 v. Qatar..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Mohamed Saqr Ahmed				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					3	DF	Marcone Amaral Costa Júnior				
3	DF	Craig Moore		65		77	4	DF	Ibrahim Abdulla Al-Ghanim				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	18			67	6	DF	Abdulla Obaid Koni		66		
5	MF	Jason Culina					8	DF	Saad Sattam Saud Al-Shammari (c)				46*
7	MF	Brett Emerton					13	DF	Mostafa Abdi Abdulla				
8	MF	Luke Wilkshire					5	MF	Majdi Abdulla Siddiq				46
11	MF	David Carney					14	MF	Khalfan Ibrahim Khalfan Al-Khalfan				
18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	33				15	MF	Talal Hassan Ali Al-Bloushi				78
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy	10			70	16	MF	Fábio César Montezine				
10	FW	Scott McDonald					9	FW	Ali Hassan Afif Yahya				
SUBSTITUTES													
6	MF	Jacob Burns					2	GK	Rajab Hamza Qassim				
12	GK	Ante Cović					7	DF	Ali Nasser Saleh				
13	DF	Jade North					10	FW	Waleed Jassem Abdulla Jasemi				78
14	FW	Brett Holman				77	11	FW	Mesha! Abdullah				
15	FW	John Aloisi				70	12	FW	Magid Mohamed Hassan				
16	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					17	MF	Wesam Rizik Abdulmajid				46
17	MF	Carl Valeri				67	18	DF	Mesaad Ali Al-Hamad				46*
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Jorge Daniel Fossati Lurachi				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Subkhiddin Mohd Salleh (Malaysia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Thanom Borikut (Thailand)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mohd Sabri Mat Daud (Malaysia)											

Rajab Hamza Qassim is also shown as Rajab Hamza Kassim.

match report from FFA

Australia's 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign got off to the perfect start, with a convincing 3-0 win over Qatar at the Telstra Dome in Melbourne.

A blistering first half by Australia set up the win, in front of over almoat 51,000 fans, with goals by Joshua Kennedy (10'), Tim Cahill (17') and Mark Bresciano (33').

Pim Verbeek's decision to bring his overseas stars back was justified, as they simply ran rings around a shell-shocked Qatar, whose belief sunk after Kennedy headed Australia ahead in the 10th minute.

The second half saw Australia see the effects of the travel set in and while Qatar played better and had several chances they never really offered a great threat on Mark Schwarzer's goal.

Verbeek's reign as Socceroos coach could not have got off to a better start and was very satisfied after the match, although he acknowledged it was only going to get tougher from here on.

Knowing that tiredness from the hectic travel would play a role later in the game, Verbeek knew he had to get goals early and against the norm went for a two-pronged attack, with the next generation of strikers in Scott McDonald and Kennedy taking centre stage.

The players responded magnificently, the two strikers combining in the 4th minute, to set up Cahill, whose shot was blocked away by Qatar keeper Saqr.

Australia's aerial dominance was already evident, when in the 10th minute, Kennedy managed to out-jump two Qatari defenders to head home Brett Emerton's cross from the right. The confidence grew and any neutral would have thought it was Australia that had been training together for a month and not just the few days they actually had in Melbourne.

The movement had the Qataris chasing shadows; the passing was crisp and precise on most occasions; while the crossing both by Emerton and David Carney always had the Qatari defence on the back foot.

It was no surprise then that Australia's lead was doubled after 17 minutes, Cahill magnificently guiding a Luke Wilkshire corner into a surprisingly empty net.

Kennedy almost had a second on 28 minutes, but was denied by the outstretched foot of Saqr, but the inevitable third was not long in coming.

McDonald brilliantly held the ball up on the edge of the penalty box, saw the late run of Bresciano into the heart of the box and placed his pass perfectly for the Palermo midfielder, who buried his shot past Saqr.

Cahill should have made it four minutes later, getting his head to another Emerton cross, but this time Saqr was equal to the task.

With such a commanding lead and the effects of the travel starting to set in once in the changing room at the break, it was inevitable that the second half was always going to prove tougher for the home side. And while Qatar, defended further up the pitch and showed more composure on the ball, Australia's defence, which included Queensland Roar's Craig Moore, was looking solid.

It was still Australia creating the best chances, with Wilshire's powerful drive saved by Saqr; Cahill went close with another header; Bresciano was also denied by a good save from Saqr; while Kennedy saw a header go inches over the crossbar.

Qatar's best chance came in the 58th minute, when Mesaad was left with a relatively simple finish from close range, but contrived to send his shot into the side-netting.

The only sour note on the night was an ankle injury to Kennedy, which saw him substituted by John Aloisi.

Aloisi, disappointed not to be starting, should have scored late in the match, when he was on the end of a terrific 50-metre ball from captain Lucas Neill, but he scuffed his shot and the ball went weakly to a relieved Saqr.

But the damage had already been done in the first half and sent an ominous warning to its other two rivals in the group China and Iraq, who are expected to put up much more of a fight than Qatar did tonight.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
22nd. March 2008,			National Stadium, Singapore				Damp and humid					6282	
Singapore..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Singapore..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Lionel Lewis					1	GK	Ante Čović				
3	DF	Baihakki bin Khaizan					4	DF	Jade North				71
5	DF	Mohamed Noh bin Rahman					2	DF	Adam Griffiths				
6	DF	Precious Emuejuraye					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				63
16	DF	Daniel Bennett					3	DF	Nikolai Topor-Stanley				
7	MF	Shi Jiayi				61	5	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
14	MF	John Wilkinson				46*	15	MF	James Holland				
15	MF	Fahrudin Mustafić				71	11	FW	James Troisi				
9	FW	Aleksandar Đurić				46	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)				46
10	FW	Indra Sahdan bin Daud (c)				64	8	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				46*
17	FW	Mohammad Shahril bin Ishak				46**	7	FW	Mark Bridge				80
SUBSTITUTES													
	MF	Muhammad Ridhuan bin Muhamad				61	17	MF	Leigh Broxham				71
	FW	Fazrul Nawaz				46	13	DF	Adrian Leijer				63
	DF	Juma'at bin Jantan				64	20	FW	Nathan Burns				46
	MF	Hariss s/o Harun				46*	9	FW	Bruce Djite				46*
	MF	Mohammad Isa bin Abdul Halim				71	23	FW	Ryan Griffiths				80
	FW	Agu Casmir				46**							
Team Coach		Radojko Avramovic					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager						
Referee		Veerapool Prayoon (Thailand)											
Assistant Referee 1		Rosli Omar (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 2		Haja Maldin (Singapore)											

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos have come away from their match against Singapore with a 0-0 draw at a very damp and humid National Stadium in Singapore.

Neither side was able to muster a winning goal on the very wet and slippery pitch, which took a hammering an hour before kick-off and was chopped up quite badly.

The heavy conditions certainly played into the home sides favour more than the young and inexperienced Australian side, who nonetheless acquitted themselves well.

Nine players made their senior international debuts for Australia and will have given Pim Verbeek an eye not just to Wednesday's all important World Cup qualifier against China, but into the future as well.

The best chances for Australia came in the first half, with Mark Bridge going the closest with a shot that hit the top of the crossbar.

The first meaningful shot at goal came from Australia after 9 minutes, when a powerful low free kick beat the wall, but was well saved by Singapore goalkeeper Lionel Lewis.

Both sides were dangerous when they got the ball wide, with James Troisi dangerous for Australia, while Shi Jiayi was doing likewise for Singapore.

Troisi was presented with the next chance for Australia, pouncing on a rebound and his shot from 20 metres was again well-saved by Lewis. A minute later, Mark Bridge went close when his shot beat

Lewis but hit the woodwork.

Kewell was denied a chance at goal by a desperate Daniel Bennett tackle on the edge of the area.

After a fairly slow start, Singapore came more into the match and Alex Duric went close with two quick chances, although neither really troubled Ante Covic.

Verbeek, with an eye to Wednesday night, took off the effective Thompson and Kewell at half time with Nathan Burns and Bruce Djite coming on.

But the heavy pitch and very humid conditions sapped the energy and with a host of substitutions, the match lacked rhythm in the second half.

Djite had the best chance for Australia midway through the second half, when he received a nice ball left of goal, but Lewis stuck out a foot to block his shot.

Nikolai Topor-Stanley was denied a 35-metre goalbound shot by an acrobatic save from Lewis.

Singapore had the chance to win it late on, but Covic did well to save low down to his left, while Topor-Stanley needed to clear a dangerous cross from close range, as Singapore pressed for a late winner.

Verbeek, while disappointed with not winning the game, could not fault the players effort, especially in the difficult conditions.

"I was very pleased with the first 75 minutes," he told Fox Sports after the match. "It was a good test for our players and I have learnt a lot. It was difficult out there and I had some very nice surprises from

players, who did better than I thought they would."

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
26th. March 2008, 14.00			Tuodong Stadium, Kunming, People's Republic of China			Very good			20C		33000		
People's Republic of China..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, People's Republic of China..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Zong Lei					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer		88		
2	DF	Zhang Shuai					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				
3	DF	Sun Xiang					3	DF	Jade North				
4	DF	Feng Xiaoting		3			6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
5	DF	Li Weifeng					5	MF	Jason Ćulina				
10	DF	Zheng Zhi (c)				68	7	MF	Carl Valeri				
17	MF	Sun Jihai					8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
18	MF	Zhou Haibin				62	11	MF	David Carney		17		
9	FW	Han Peng				73	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
13	FW	Zhu Ting					18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
16	FW	Jiang Ning					10	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				10
SUBSTITUTES													
6	MF	Shao Jiayi				68	4	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				
7	GK	Liu Jian					9	FW	Mark Bridge				
8	MF	Du Zhenyu					12	GK	Ante Ćović				
11	MF	Qu Bo				73	14	FW	Brett Holman		79		10
12	GK	Song Zhen-Yu					15	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
14	DF	Wang Xiao					16	MF	Jacob Burns				
15	DF	Xiao Zhanbo				62	17	DF	Nikolai Topor-Stanley				
Team Coach		Vladmir Petrovic					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager		Wei Shaohui					Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Mohamed Omar Al-Saeedi (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1		Nasser Bahrooz Saqer Ahmad (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mohamed Jasem Saif Hamad Al-Jalaf Almehairi (United Arab Emirates)											

match report from the FFA

Mark Schwarzer, the hero of Australia's 2006 World Cup qualifying campaign, may well prove to be the difference again, despite only being two games into the 2010 campaign, after playing a leading role in the Qantas Socceroos 0-0 draw with China in Kunming.

And again it was a penalty save that could prove pivotal, as Schwarzer turned from villain to hero in the 89th minute. Having given away the penalty after fouling Qu Bo in the penalty box, Schwarzer guessed correctly and saved Shao Jiayi's shot to his left.

In the end, David Carney should have added further salt into the Chinese players wounds in injury time, when he should have scored from close range, but took too much time to get the ball and was put off his shot.

The point means Australia remain undefeated after two games, which is exactly what Pim Verbeek was looking for heading into the crucial month of June, when the remaining four qualifiers will be played. Australia will also in all likelihood remain in top spot, depending on the result of the groups 2nd match between Qatar and Iraq, which is being played in the early hours of Thursday morning.

The effort was not lost on Verbeek, who praised the performance of his players and was happy to come away with the point.

"We were very good, I'm very proud of the boys," he said after the game. "We always like to win, but a draw was probably a fair result. After the penalty save at the end, I am very happy with the point."

Despite all the late drama, the match itself was a rather tepid affair, with China strangely letting Australia have a lot of possession and move out of its own half with relative ease, which played straight into Australia's hands and allowed them to conserve energy.

In the end China were lucky not to finish with ten men after a terrible tackle by Sun Jihai on Luke Wilkshire right in front of the Australian bench with a little over ten minutes to go, but the Chinese playmaker remarkably went unpunished by the UAE referee.

While much of the talk will be on the final few minutes, both sides did have chances, although they were few and far between.

The match started in much the same way that Australia's fortunes have been going in recent days, with Verbeek bemoaning his luck with injuries. Archie Thompson was forced off in just the ninth minute after coping a rather nasty challenge a few minutes earlier, which earned Xaitong Feng a yellow card and saw Brett Holman enter the fray a little earlier than expected.

In the 25th minute, Mark Bresciano was unlucky not to open the scoring, when he was set up by Holman. However Besciano's strike at full stretch was hit straight at the Chinese keeper.

China's attacks were all too fleeting, mainly relying on high balls into the area to unsettle the defence. Zheng Zhi had the first meaningful shot which Schwarzer saved comfortably, while Zhu Ting hit a volley from close range over the bar late in the half.

China pressed with more urgency at the start of the second half, but with Australia's defence keeping a tight shape they were unable to get any clear shots at goal.

With Australia regrouping and getting more of the ball and China not pressing, the game failed to open up and it looked like the game was safe for Australia.

That was until a long ball for Bo saw Schwarzer come off his line and while he blocked the initial ball, Bo went to ground as Schwarzer played at the ball on the ground and the UAE official pointed to the spot.

However, Schwarzer stood tall to regain his composure and make the important save, just like he did during the penalty shootout against Uruguay in 2005 that earned Australia a place at the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany.

"It's definitely a highlight," Schwarzer said after the match. "I thought the penalty decision was harsh and to lose it then would have been unjust, as I thought we deserved something from the game. I think if you look at our preparation and the conditions we had to play in, it's an amazing result."

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
23rd. May 2008,			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, New South Wales									29910	
Australia..1 v. Ghana..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Ghana..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer						GK	William Amamoo				50
3	DF	Michael Beauchamp					4	DF	John Paintsil		50		
4	DF	Jade North					5	DF	John Mensah (c)				
	DF	Adam Griffiths				64	18	DF	Eric Addo				
6	MF	Jacob Burns				79		DF	Harrison Afful				
7	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak					6	MF	Anthony Annan				
11	MF	David Carney				79*	7	MF	Laryea Kingston				
8	FW	Joel Griffiths					14	MF	Prince Buaben Abankwah				64
10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)				72		MF	Emmanuel Agyemang-Badu				79
	FW	James Troisi				64*	9	FW	Manuel Junior Agogo				
	FW	Mile Sterjovski	47	28	87		23	FW	Haminu Draman				
SUBSTITUTES													
17	MF	James Holland				79		GK	George Owu				50
	FW	Mark Bridge				72	13	FW	Derick Asamoah				64
	DF	Nikolai Topor-Stanley				79*		DF	David Addy				79
	FW	Daniel "Danny" Allsopp				64							
12	DF	Matthew Špiranović				64*							
	MF	Leigh Broxham											
	GK	Michael Petkovic											
	DF	Rodrigo Vargas											
	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne											
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Sellas Tetteh				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Hajime Matsuo (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Nathan Gibson (Australia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Matthew Cream (Australia)											

John Paintsil is also shown as John Pantsil. He was incorrectly registered at birth as Pantsil.

match report from the FFA

A Mile Sterjovski thunderbolt less than a minute into the second half, has given the Qantas Socceroos a 1-0 win over Ghana tonight at the Sydney Football Stadium.

While Sterjovski's goal was a highlight, his night ended on a personal downer, after he was given his marching orders with three minutes remaining after receiving a second yellow card.

Ghana can feel a little aggrieved that they didn't get at least a draw from the game, as at times they showed Australia just why they are ranked in the top twenty in the world, with Australia having to defend desperately at times.

Sterjovski's strike came so quickly after the half time whistle that many people had yet to sit back in their seats, as he dispossessed a Ghanaian defender and headed goalwards. Upon getting to the edge of the penalty area and goalkeeper Amamoo in no man's land, the Derby County striker let rip and the ball flew into the back of the net.

Coach Pim Verbeek was happy to get the win, but was more concerned about the performance and conceded there was a lot of improvement in the team.

"Result is nice, especially for the fans," Verbeek said after the game. "I saw a lot of things I was expecting from players. First of all fantastic commitment and hard working; some players did very well in positions where I will need them in the future. But we didn't start the game the way we normally start and during the game we got better and better. We were a little uncertain about certain situations, but I can't blame them (the players)."

"Definitely, definitely," he said on improvement. "This is not normally the way we can play and to be honest I didn't expect it also."

Sterjovski had the first meaningful shot at goal in the 21st minute, a volley that was struck well, but straight to Amamoo in the Ghanaian goal.

Good chances though were hard to find, although it was Ghana that had the Australian defence troubled with Manuel Agogo especially proving a handful.

Sterjovski's strike straight after half time, eased the pressure on Australia, but Ghana were forcing the pace as the half wore on.

Schwarzer was being called on more and more, but usually he was impeccably placed and was rarely tested.

His best save came in injury time when his quick reflexes turned a delightful back heeled shot by Haminu around the post.

Minutes later to the joy of the almost 30,000 crowd, the full time whistle was blown and maintained Verbeek's unblemished start to his Aussie tenure.

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
1st. June 2008, 17.00			Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, Queensland			Cool, light rain			18C		48678		
Australia..1 v. Iraq..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Iraq..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					12	GK	Noor Sabri Abbas Hasan				
3	DF	Michael Beauchamp					2	DF	Saad Attiya Hafidh				
4	DF	Jade North					3	DF	Basem Abbas Gatea				
5	MF	Jason Culina					14	DF	Haidar Abdul-Amir Hussain		23		
7	MF	Brett Emerton					15	DF	Ali Hussein Rehema Al-Ka'abi		13		
8	MF	Luke Wilshire		89			5	MF	Nashat Akram Abid Ali				
11	MF	David Carney					9	MF	Qusay Munir Aboudy				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		48			11	MF	Hawar Mulla Mohammed Taher Zebari				84
18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				62	18	MF	Mahdi Karim Ajeel				68
9	FW	Scott McDonald				65	7	FW	Emad Mohammed Ridha				
10	FW	Harlod "Harry" Kewell (c)	47			77	10	FW	Younus Mahmood Khalaf (c)				
SUBSTITUTES													
2	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne					1	GK	Mohammed Gassid Kadhim Jaberi	Al-			
6	MF	Carl Valeri				62	4	MF	Saad M.Ali				
12	GK	Michael Petkovic					6	MF	Salih Sadir Salih Al-Sadoun				68
14	FW	Brett Holman				65	8	MF	Haitham Kadhim Tahir				
15	FW	Bruce Djite				77	13	DF	Mohammed Ali Karim				
16	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle					16	FW	Mustafa Karim Abdullah				84
17	DF	Rodrigo Vargas					17	DF	Yasser Rahd Mohammed Rubai	Al-			
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Adnan Hamad Majeed Al-Abbasi				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Ravshan Irmatov (Uzbekistan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Bahadyr Kochkarov (Kyrgyzstan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Abdukhamidullo Rasulov (Uzbekistan)											

Haidar Abdul-Amir Hussain is also shown as Haider Hussain, Ali Hussein Rehema Al-Ka'abi is also shown as Ali Hassein Rhema, Mohammed Gassid Kadhim Al-Jaberi is also shown as Mohammed Kassid, Mohammed Ali Karim is also shown as Muhammad Ali Karem.

match report from the FFA

Australia is just one win away from a likely place in the next phase of the 2010 World Cup qualifiers after defeating Iraq 1-0 at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium.

Coach Pim Verbeek described Australia's win, courtesy of a Harry Kewell header in the 47th minute, as lucky, with Mark Schwarzer once again proving his value in between the sticks for Australia.

The three points gained by Australia, now puts them on seven points, six clear of the Iraq's and just three away from the 10 points that Verbeek believes will be enough to secure Australia's passage to the next phase.

It was however anything but easy for Australia, and Iraq can feel desperately unlucky not to have got something out of the game, a fact Verbeek acknowledged after the match.

"Four games and no goals against, but today it was not what we deserved," he said with an awry smile on his face. "I am very happy with my three points."

"We started quite nervous in the game and were lucky with the ball on the crossbar and that was the story of the whole game. We gave too many chances away; we were lucky."

Schwarzer stood tall again, as he did in China just over two months ago, with several terrific saves to deny what appeared certain goals, as the Iraq attack found holes in the Australian defence.

The most telling moment of the match, came just two minutes into the second half, when the impressive Kewell rose unopposed to head home a beautiful cross from Brett Emerton on the right.

Iraq started the stronger and put paid to the Verbeek's theory that they would play defensive and come for a point. They were clearly here for three points and almost had the lead in the 5th minute, when Emad Ridha pounced on Schwarzer's punched clearance to drive a shot from 20 metres against the crossbar.

That seemed to wake Australia up as they got back into the match, with Mark Bresciano and Kewell forcing saves from Noor Sabri Abbas in the Iraq goal.

Kewell was getting some special treatment and wild lunges at the Australian captain saw Ali Hussein Rahema and Haider Hussain yellow carded.

Iraq should have taken the lead in the 26th minute, when Ridha somehow found himself in acres of space in the box, but Schwarzer was equal to the task and spread himself well to block the shot.

Ten minutes later Ridha's captain, Younes Mahmoud, should have done better with his headed effort, which went wide under no pressure from seven yards out.

Australia finished the half strongly; forcing a succession of corners which started when Luke Wilshire's shot was blocked away by Noor.

That momentum seemed to carry through after the break and Kewell, who was always probing and causing concern for the Iraqi defence slipped in to guide Emerton's cross past a stagnate Noor, sparking wild celebrations and a few sighs of relief.

Australia looked more composed in the second half and Kewell should have added a second to his tally on 66 minutes, when he ran onto Wilshire's brilliant ball in behind the defence. But after taking one touch, Kewell could only guide his shot straight into the arms of Noor from close range.

Iraq stepped up its efforts for an equaliser in the last twenty minutes and several times, balls in behind the Australian defence caused anxious moments, with Ridha's poor first touch ruining a great chance, while Mahmoud saw another chance fritted away when he took too long and was eventually closed down, although a ricochet almost embarrassed Australia. Schwarzer again came to the fore with seven minutes remaining, denying Hawar who was sent through, albeit suspiciously well offside. Brett Holman went close to settling the contest with four minutes remaining, his shot, which looked in for all money, slamming into the side-netting.

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
7th. June 2008, 20.00			Al Ahli Stadium, Dubai, United Arab Emirates			Hot and humid			35C		8000		
Iraq..1 v. Australia..0													
half time, Iraq..1 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
12	GK	Noor Sabri Abbas Hasan					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Saad Attiya Hafidh		43			2	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				64
3	DF	Basem Abbas Gatea					3	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
14	DF	Haidar Abdul-Amir Hussain					4	DF	Jade North				
15	DF	Ali Hussein Rehema Al-Ka'abi					5	MF	Jason Culina				
5	MF	Nashat Akram Abid Ali				78	6	MF	Carl Valeri				
9	MF	Qusay Munir Aboudy					7	MF	Brett Emerton				
11	MF	Hawar Mulla Mohammed Taher Zebari				68*	8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
18	MF	Mahdi Karim Ajeel				68	11	MF	David Carney				
7	FW	Emad Mohammed Ridha	27				13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		45+1		46
10	FW	Younus Mahmood Khalaf (c)		81			10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)				70
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Mohammed Gassid Kadhim Al-Jaberi					9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				64
4	MF	Salam Sh. Ali					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
6	MF	Salih Sadir Salih Al-Sadoun				68	14	FW	Brett Holman				46
8	MF	Haitham Kadhim Tahir				78	15	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
13	DF	Mohammed Ali Karim				68*	16	DF	Rodrigo Vargas				
16	FW	Mustafa Karim Abdullah					17	FW	Scott McDonald				70
17	FW	Ali Salah Hashim					18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
Team Coach		Adnan Hamad Majeed Al-Abbasi					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Kazuhiro Matsumura (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Yasuhiko Yamazaki (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Toshiyuki Nagi (Japan)											

match report from the AFC

Iraq kept their World Cup qualification chances alive as Emad Mohammed's fortuitous first-half goal gave them a 1-0 victory over Group One leaders Australia at Al Ahli Stadium on Saturday. In a game of few chances, Emad's seemingly overhit cross deceived keeper Mark Schwarzer after 28 minutes and ended up in the back of the net to hand Pim Verbeek's side their first loss of the campaign. The result means the Asian Cup holders now trail both Australia and Qatar by just three points with two games remaining. Both sides showed plenty of endeavour but little in the way of actual attacking threat in the opening twenty minutes before Iraq began to take the upper hand. Bassim Abbas had the first real effort of note as the full-back collected a lay-off before hitting a right-foot shot that keeper Mark Schwarzer tipped over the bar. Bassim was involved again shortly afterwards when his deep cross from the left was headed narrowly wide by Emad Mohammed. Younis Mahmoud's tricky run was then brought to a halt on the edge of the box after an excellantly-timed challenge from Jade North. However, Iraq did not have long to wait before they eventually did take the lead after 27 minutes with Schwarzer partly to blame. Emad's deep, inswinging cross from near the left-hand touchline proved too long for anyone to get on the end of but it caught out the Australian keeper, who was way off his line, and he could not scramble back in time to prevent the ball dropping over his outstretched hand and into the net. The home side began the second period in lively fashion as Emad's cute backheel set Nashat Akram free down the left and his low cross was eventually scrambled clear with Younis lurking at the near post. Australia began to come more into the game and a well-worked move saw Brett Holman with space in the box but the substitute drove his shot straight at keeper Noor Sabri Abbas just after the hour mark. Younis was set free but Schwarzer was quickly out to partially smother the chance as Iraq looked to put the result beyond doubt in the final ten minutes. A fine challenge by Haitham Kadhim then prevented Scott McDonald a clear strike on goal as the Celtic forward met Holman's driven cross in the six-yard box. David Carney then saw a volley at the back post kept out by a combination of Bassim and keeper Noor deep in stoppage time as Iraq held on to pick up their first win in Group One.

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
14th. June 2008, 19.00			Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium, Doha, Qatar			Very hot, dusty and humid			39C		12000		
Qatar..1 v. Australia..3													
half time, Qatar..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mohamed Ahmed Sagr					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer		74		
3	DF	Marcone Amaral Costa Júnior					3	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
6	DF	Abdulla Obaid Koni (c)				33	4	DF	Jade North				
10	DF	Mesaad Ali Al-Hamad					5	MF	Jason Culina				
13	DF	Ibrahim Majid Abdulmajid				65	6	MF	Carl Valeri		52		
16	DF	Bilal Mohammed Rajab					7	MF	Brett Emerton	17, 56			
11	MF	Fábio César Montezine		90+4			8	MF	Luke Wilkshire		88		
15	MF	Talal Hassan Ali Al-Bloushi					11	MF	David Carney		26		
17	MF	Wesam Rizik Abdulmajid		70			18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano		57		
7	FW	Yusef Ahmed Ali		42		46	13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
18	FW	Andrés Sebastián Soria Quintana					10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)	75			85
SUBSTITUTES													
2	GK	Rajab Hamza Qassim					2	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				
4	DF	Ibrahim Abdulla Al-Ghanim				33	9	FW	Scott McDonald				
5	MF	Majdi Abdulla Siddiq					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
8	DF	Saad Sattam Saud Al-Shammari					13	DF	Rodrigo Vargas				
9	FW	Sayed Ali Bechir					15	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
12	FW	Magid Mohamed Hassan				46	16	DF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
14	MF	Khalfan Ibrahim Khalfan Al-Khalfan	90+4			65	17	FW	Bruce Djite				85
Team Coach		Jorge Daniel Fossati Lurachi					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Lee Gi-Young (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 1		Yang Byoung-Eun (Korea Republic)											
Assistant Referee 2		Lee Min-Hu (Korea Republic)											

Rajab Hamza Qassim is also shown as Rajab Hamza Kassim.

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos have advanced to the next stage of World Cup qualifying after beating Qatar 3-1 at the Al Sadd Club Stadium in Doha, early Sunday morning.

Two goals from Brett Emerton and a single goal from Harry Kewell saw Australia move three points clear of both Qatar and Iraq, with the latter earlier winning 2-1 in China. That result has set up a cliffhanger in Dubai next week between Iraq and Qatar, to decide the second team to advance.

On a night where Emerton marked his 66th appearance for Australia, which jumped him into fourth place on the all-time list for A-international appearances, he showed he can still score a goal or two with two opportunist strikes either side of half time.

The first goal came after 18 minutes, when Brett Holman set Mark Bresciano free into the box on the left; his cross was perfect for Kewell in the middle, but he completely missed his shot only for Emerton to come in at the back post and slot home.

He added a second goal on 56 minutes when he raced onto a neat lobbed pass by Holman, to take one touch and then slot home. Kewell, who had an earlier strike ruled out, made it 3-0 on 75 minutes, when he pounced on an error by a Qatar defender and slammed home from close range.

Qatar got a late consolation goal in the 90th minute, when Khalfan pounced on a parry down by Schwarzer.

While it wasn't vintage football by Australia, it was a very professional performance and they showed their class when it mattered.

Australia may have had a half time lead, but they had Schwarzer to thank for keeping it that way, as he consistently foiled the Qatar attack led superbly by Sebastian Quintana and Fabio Cesar.

The pair provided a constant threat with their pace and skill on the ball, giving the Australian defence the run around at times. Fabio was also highly dangerous at set pieces with several close calls on goal.

It only took two minutes for Schwarzer to be called into action, when he diverted a Wesam 25-metre free kick away for a corner. He then had to make finger-tip saves to deny Quintana (29'), Fabio (38').

In between Emerton scored Australia's first and always looked like they had the Qatari's measure, save for the few moments provided by Quintana and Fabio.

Coach Pim Verbeek was obviously relieved and delighted to get the three points and ensure qualification prior to the last game.

"We had a very good start; the first 20-25 minutes; we played very well and scored a good goal and were completely in control," he said. "Then we started to lose the ball a little bit too easy and give simple free kicks away and put ourselves under a little bit of pressure. The second half we did very well and scored (goal) at a good moment of course. It's a pity we gave the goal away, but for us we have qualified and that's the most important thing."

In the earlier group match between China and Iraq in Tianjin, Iraq came from a goal down to win 2-1 thus setting up a tantalizing clash with Qatar next week in Dubai.

World Cup, 3rd. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
22nd. June 2008, 18.00			ANZ Stadium, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)			Cold and clear			13C		70054		
Australia..0 v. People's Republic of China..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. People's Republic of China..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Michael Petkovic					12	GK	Song Zhen-yu				
2	DF	Nikolai Topor-Stanley					3	DF	Sun Xiang	11			
3	DF	Matthew Spiranovic					4	DF	Zhang Yaokun				
4	DF	Jade North					5	DF	Li Weifeng				
5	DF	Ruben Zadkovich					7	DF	Xiao Zhanbo (c)				73
6	MF	Carl Valeri					13	DF	Xu Yunglong				69
7	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				79	6	MF	Wang Dong				
8	MF	James Holland				63	8	MF	Du Zhenyu				
11	MF	James Troisi				83	11	MF	Qu Bo				
9	FW	Bruce Djite					15	MF	Liu Jian				
10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)					18	FW	Gao Lin				87
SUBSTITUTES													
12	GK	Ante Covic					1	GK	Zong Lei				
13	MF	David Williams				63	2	DF	Wang Xiao				
14	MF	Kristian Sarkies				83	9	FW	Han Peng				87
16	MF	Stuart Musialik					10	DF	Zheng Zhi				73
17	MF	Neil Kilkeny				79	14	DF	Wu Hao				69
18	DF	Rodrigo Vargas					16	MF	Huang Bowen				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Vladimir Petrovic				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager		Wei Shaohui				
Referee		Khalil Ibrahim Al-Ghamdi (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Mohammed Hamad Al-Ghamdi (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Hamdi Al-Sheikh Al-Kadri (Syrian Arab Republic)											

match report from the AFC

Sun Xiang's early goal proved the difference as China ended their World Cup qualifying campaign on a high note with a 1-0 victory over Australia at a packed ANZ Stadium on Sunday.

With the hosts having qualified for the next phase from Group One and China already eliminated, Socceroos coach Pim Verbeek named a much-changed side as he took the opportunity to have a look at a number of new players.

However, Sun's 12th minute strike ensured the majority of the 70,054 crowd left disappointed as Australia suffered their first home defeat in a World Cup qualifier since losing to New Zealand in 1981.

China even had the luxury of missing a penalty as Zheng Zhi sent a retaken effort wide with just under quarter of an hour to go.

On a bumpy surface, neither side was able to produce flowing football although China did take the lead in impressive fashion.

Ruben Zadkovich, one of four Australian debutantes who started the game, directed his headed clearance straight to Xiang and he took one touch before unleashing a cracking left-foot drive into the bottom left corner of the net.

Australia's first real opportunity came in the 20th minute when skipper Harry Kewell made his way down the right before floating a cross into the box for Bruce Djite but the striker just failed to get his head to the ball.

Mile Jedinak then went close with a header from a free kick before James Troisi caused panic in the Chinese defence.

Xiang blasted well over the bar on the half hour mark before Carl Valeri forced goalkeeper Song Zhenyu into a smart save in the 42nd minute with a long-range effort.

The hosts rounded off a patchy first half performance with Djite smashing a volley over the bar after Kewell had chested the ball down on the edge of the box.

Australia began the second half with a lot more urgency, but it was China who enjoyed the best of the early chances and Qu Bo hammered a shot well over the bar with only Michael Petkovic to beat after latching on to a long ball before the visitors rattled the woodwork after 58 minutes.

There was further drama in the 76th minute when Zadkovich, who had a largely forgettable evening, conceded a penalty after he was adjudged to have upended Gao Lin in the box.

Zheng smashed the spot kick past Petkovic but the referee spotted an infringement and ordered a re-take, which the midfielder dragged wide of the right upright.

However, there was to be no last-minute escape for Verbeek's men as China ended a disappointing qualifying campaign in positive fashion.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
19th. August 2008,			Loftus Road Stadium, London, England										
Republic of South Africa..2 v. Australia..2													
half time, Republic of South Africa..1 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
16	GK	Itumeleng Khune					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Bradley Carnell					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				46
4	DF	Teboho Aaron Mokoena		7			16	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne		87		
5	DF	Mogammat Nasief Morris					3	MF	Scott Chipperfield				46*
6	MF	Ntuthuko Macbeth Sibaya					5	MF	Jason Culina				
8	MF	Lawrence Siphiwe Tshabalala				66	8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
10	MF	Teko Modise	58				13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				62
18	MF	Siyabonga Nkosi	21			65	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
21	MF	Kagisho Dikgacoi				78	7	FW	Scott McDonald				46**
17	FW	Benedict "Benni" McCarthy		30		73	9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy	38			73
20	FW	Bryce Moon					21	FW	Mile Sterjovski	25			62*
SUBSTITUTES													
9	MF	Surprise Moriri				66	4	DF	Mark Milligan				46
11	MF	Samuel Lefa Tsutsulupa				73	11	MF	David Carney				46*
15	FW	Sibusiso Zuma				65	10	FW	Brett Holman				46**
7	MF	Lance Davids				78	12	FW	Bruce Djite				73
1	GK	Moeneeb Josephs					14	MF	Carl Valeri				62
13	DF	Bongani Khumalo					20	FW	Richard Garcia				62*
23	DF	Nazeer Allie					6	DF	Matthew Spiranovic				
19	DF	Bevan Fransman					18	GK	Michael Petkovic				
22	DF	Innocent Mdledle					19	DF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				
12	MF	Thulasizwe Mbuyane											
14	MF	Matthew Pattison											
24	MF	Dean Furman											
Team Coach		Joel Santana					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Howard Webb (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Dave Richardson (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		Peter Kirkup (England)											

match report from fourfourtwo

South Africa midfielder Teko Modise struck a magnificent equaliser to ensure this morning's friendly at Loftus Road ended in stalemate.

Strikes from Mile Sterjovski and Joshua Kennedy cancelled out Siyabonga Nkosi's opener to give Australia a deserved half-time lead.

The Socceroos dominated the first half but were assisted by abysmal South Africa goalkeeper Itumeleng Khune, whose incompetence helped them to both goals.

But after the interval, when coach Pim Verbeek made a raft of changes, Bafana Bafana assumed control with some entertaining play - crowned by Modise's bullet finish.

Australia approached the match as crucial preparation for the last round of World Cup qualifying and Verbeek gave a large portion of his squad some game time.

Drawn alongside Japan, Bahrain, Uzbekistan, Qatar in Group A, they have a great chance of qualifying for 2010 with tonight's game the penultimate friendly before the serious business begins.

Star names Harry Kewell and Brett Emerton were missing, but they still paraded Fulham goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer and West Ham defender Lucas Neill.

Benni McCarthy was South Africa's main draw and the Blackburn marksman could only watch as his side were forced to weather an early onslaught.

They were reduced to panic stations when McCarthy's club-mate Aaron Mokoena tugged back Scott McDonald on the edge of the area.

McDonald went tumbling down and Mokoena was booked, but Mark Bresciano's free-kick was easily cleared to safety.

Australia were bombarding the opposition box with crosses as they continued to display the greater fluency in attack, but there was little end result.

Sterjovski tried his luck from the edge of the area but his effort was easily blocked by Nasief Morris.

Australia looked in full control as South Africa scrambled to clear another incisive move, but then the 2010 World Cup hosts opened the scoring against the run of play.

McCarthy did the initial damage with a backheel into the box collected by Nkosi, who raced ahead and beat Schwarzer with a neat finish.

But Australia were level four minutes later when Vince Grella's long-ball was gathered by Sterjovski who easily chipped over a stranded and dithering Khune.

Normal service resumed with the Socceroos in control and in the 38th minute they crept into the lead.

Mark Bresciano floated in a simple free-kick which completely bamboozled Khune, giving Kennedy a free header which the Germany-based striker accepted.

South Africa started the second half brightly with Bryce Moon's good work being undone by last-gasp defending from Mark Milligan.

David Carney blazed narrowly over at the other end but Bafana Bafana were now dominating and equalised in superb fashion.

McCarthy showed composure to work Moon into space and the Panathinaikos right-back picked out an unmarked Modise, who produced an unstoppable finish.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
6th. September 2008,			Philips Stadium, Eindhoven, Netherlands									22500	
Netherlands..1 v. Australia..2													
half time, Netherlands..1 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Maarten Stekelenberg			44		1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	John Heitinga					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				
3	DF	André Ooijer					13	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				70
4	DF	Joris Mathijsen					5	MF	Jason Culina				78
5	MF	Giovanni van Bronckhorst (c)					7	MF	Brett Emerton				46
6	MF	Mark van Bommel					8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
8	MF	Nigel de Jong					11	MF	David Carney				
10	MF	Rafaël van der Vaart				70	14	MF	Carl Valeri				
7	FW	Robin van Persie				46	9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy	76			78*
9	FW	Dirk "Klaas-Jan" Huntelaar	6			44	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell	45(pk)			46*
11	FW	Ryan Babel				82	16	FW	Brett Holman				70*
SUBSTITUTES													
14	FW	Dirk Kuyt				46	17	MF	Jacob Burns				78
16	GK	Henk Timmer				44	21	FW	Mile Sterjovski				46
17		Ibrahim Afellay				70	20	FW	Richard Garcia				78*
18		Jan Vennegor of Hesselink				82	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				46*
12		Demy de Zeeuw					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				70
15		Tim de Cler					15	FW	Bruce Djite				70*
19		Khalid Boulahrouz					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
							3	MF	Scott Chipperfield				
							4	DF	Jade North				
							24	DF	Shane Steffanuto				
Team Coach		Bert van Marwijk				Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					
Team Manager						Team Manager		Gary Moretti					
Referee		Martin Atkinson (England)											
Assistant Referee 1		Philip Sharp (England)											
Assistant Referee 2		Muhammed Matadar (England)											

match report from the FFA

Australia defeated the Netherlands in an international friendly this morning (Australian time), 2-1, with goals to Harry Kewell and Josh Kennedy.

The Qantas Socceroos were forced to come from behind after conceding an early opening goal from Dutch striker Klaas Jan Huntelaar.

A penalty from Kewell right on the stroke of half time had the teams level at the break and Kennedy's headed winner came with just less than fifteen minutes remaining.

Qantas Socceroos coach, Pim Verbeek, played down the result against the fourth ranked team in world football, emphasising that it is a "friendly match only."

Verbeek said the players did well but said he is focussed on Wednesday's 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan in Tashkent.

"I am focussed on Wednesday's match which will be very different. Different circumstances, different field and a World Cup qualifier."

The match, just the second meeting between the two teams at senior level, got off to a similar start to the last meeting in 2006, when the Dutch scored early. In their meaningful attack, a long ball was played down the left for Ryan Babel, who did well to get his cross over from the by-line. Huntelaar, who checked his run into the box, was in perfect position and clinically finished from 10 yards, past the outstretched leg of Lucas Neill and the despairing dive of Mark Schwarzer.

However Australia showed they were not about to be overawed by the situation, with PSV Eindhoven midfielder Jason Culina, going just wide with a diving header from Brett Emerton's cross.

Schwarzer had little to do in the first half, but did have to save at the feet of John Heitinga after twenty minutes, after he was played into the penalty box from a quick free kick.

Australia though was pressing well, with Brett Holman and Emerton lively going forward and it was Holman, racing onto a deft header, who probably should have equalised in the 37th minute. But Dutch keeper Maarten Stekelenberg, came off his line and deflected Holman's shot away for a corner.

From the corner, Neill hit a low shot wide, while five minutes later Kennedy headed over the bar, as Australia kept pressing.

Their reward came a minute later, when a poor back pass by Heitinga, saw Kennedy and Stekelenberg contest for the ball, with the Dutch keeper clipping Kennedy just inside the penalty area.

In a double whammy for the Dutch, not only was it a penalty to Australia, but English referee, Martin Atkinson, dismissed Stekelenberg. Kewell made no mistake with a powerful strike past replacement keeper Henk Timmer.

With the Dutch down to ten men, Verbeek was taking no chances and took Kewell and Emerton off at the break with Mark Bresciano and Mile Sterjovski coming on.

With the Dutch sitting deep and Australia waiting patiently for their chance, openings were few and far between.

Schwarzer was forced to save a Rafael van der Vaart free kick on the hour, while Kennedy had a half chance on 69 minutes, when he shot tamely at Timmer, with Sterjovski unfortunately free at the back post and set to score if the ball came his way.

Australia's patience was rewarded when Luke Wilkshire supplied a terrific cross to Kennedy, who beautifully guided his header past Timmer; his fourth goal in just his eighth appearance for the Qantas Socceroos.

As expected the Dutch came back strongly with substitute Jan Vennegor of Hesselink almost scoring with his first touch; heading wide a free kick, while Schwarzer denied Dirk Kuyt a last gasp equaliser with a brave save from close range.

The Qantas Socceroos travel to Tashkent on Sunday for their World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan and will go into the game with a great deal of confidence.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
10th. September 2008, 12.00			Pakhtakor Stadium, Tashkent, Uzbekistan			Dry with light smoke and wind			24C		22500		
Uzbekistan..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Uzbekistan..0 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
12	GK	Ignatiy Nesterov					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Anzur Ismailov					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				
3	DF	Ilhomjon Suyunov					13	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				
5	DF	Asror Alikulov					3	MF	Scott Chipperfield	26			
6	DF	Islom Inomov		34			4	MF	Jacob Burns				
8	MF	Server Djeparov					7	MF	Brett Emerton				
9	MF	Odil Ahmedov					8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
13	MF	Vagiz Galiulin				43	14	MF	Carl Valeri		35		
15	MF	Jasur Hasanov					18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				73
11	FW	Ulugbek Bakaev				69	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				90
16	FW	Maksim Shatskikh (c)					16	FW	Brett Holman				77
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Temur Juraev					5	FW	Richard Garcia				
4	DF	Hayrulla Karimov					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
7	MF	Azizbek Haydarov					9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				
10	MF	Timur Kapadze				43	11	FW	David Carney		92		73
14	MF	Vitaliy Denisov					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
17	FW	Zaynitdin Tadiyev				69	15	FW	Bruce Djite				90
18	DF	Sakhob Jurayev					17	MF	Mile Sterjovski				77
Team Coach		Mirdjalal Kasimov					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Saad Alfadhli (Kuwait)											
Assistant Referee 1		Sulaiman Al-Shammari (Kuwait)											
Assistant Referee 2		Atallah Alenezi (Kuwait)											

match report from the FFA

Australia has kicked off its fourth and final stage of FIFA 2010 World Cup qualifying in the perfect fashion with a massive 1-0 win over Uzbekistan at the Pakhtakor Stadium in Tashkent.

Scott Chipperfield transferred his club goal scoring form to the national team with the only goal after 26 minutes.

It was a terrific performance by Australia, who defended superbly, especially in the first twenty minutes after the break, where Uzbekistan put enormous pressure on Australia, in order to keep their World Cup hopes alive.

"Away, Uzbekistan, 3 points, fantastic," was Qantas Socceroos coach, Pim Verbeek's assessment of the performance. "The boys did a fantastic job. The whole team put in a great performance, and it's a great start to win away in Uzbekistan. They showed commitment and worked hard for each other."

The win gives Australia a full three points on its first match of this round. The other four teams in the group all kicked-off their campaign last weekend, when Australia had a bye.

Verbeek's plans though before the match were thrown into turmoil, when Jason Culina and Jade North were ruled out of contention because of a stomach bug, that forced them to remain at the team hotel, with Jacob Burns coming into the line-up for Culina. Verbeek also made two other changes from the starting side that beat the Netherlands four days ago, with Scott Chipperfield coming in for David Carney and somewhat surprisingly, Mark Bresciano coming in for Josh Kennedy.

After a cautious start by both sides in the first ten minutes, the game started to liven up with several shots from both sides getting the crowd into the match.

The first decent chance came to Brett Emerton after 17 minutes, when he linked with Chipperfield and his first time shot was just over the bar.

With Australia's defence looking strong, despite a few anxious moments from a couple of dangerous balls into the penalty box, it was Australia that looked the more composed going forward and they duly took the lead after 26 minutes via Australia's two fullbacks.

Wilkshire played a good one-two with Harry Kewell on the right; then getting past his opposite fullback, he whipped over a great cross, where left fullback Chipperfield came in, heading the ball down and past the Uzbeki keeper.

Mark Bresciano should have added a second goal on the stroke of half time, that almost certainly would have killed the game off. Kewell and Holman combined, the latter sending Bresciano through, but the Palermo striker, with only the keeper to beat, went for power over placement and his strike went inches wide of the post.

After the break though, Uzbekistan threw everything they had at the Australian rear-guard, who despite being under enormous pressure, kept their shape and remained calm.

Uzbekistan thought they had claims for a penalty five minutes in, when captain Maksim Shatskikh went down in the box, but the referee waved away the appeals.

Three minutes later Wilkshire cleared a Hasanov shot from 20 metres off his line, while on the hour, Shatskikh managed to get free in the box, but his shot ended up being easy for Mark Schwarzer.

That seemed to sap the Uzbek's confidence as the pressure from the home side fell away and Australia again took control of the midfield, keeping possession and forcing the Uzbek players into lots of fouls.

Australia had a great chance on the counter with fifteen minutes to go, when Kewell fed Holman, who in turn tried to release Carney in the box, but good defensive work, saw Carney's attempted return pass to Holman touched the keeper.

Uzbekistan tried a late rally and Shatskikh was inches away from getting a connection to a flick on with just a minute to go in injury time; their last chance of grabbing at least a share of the spoils.

Australia has another seven games to play in this fourth round of qualification, with the next match to take place against Qatar in Brisbane on 15th October.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
15th. October 2008, 19.30			Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, Queensland			Thunderstorm before start			17C		34320		
Australia..4 v. Qatar..0													
half time, Australia..2 v. Qatar..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					2	GK	Abdulaziz Ali Abdulla				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					3	DF	Ibrahim Majid Abdulmajid				
3	DF	Craig Moore					6	DF	Abdulla Obaid Koni		16		
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	8				8	DF	Saad Sattam Saud Al-Shammari (c)				46
5	MF	Jason Culina					13	DF	Mostafa Abdi Abdulla				
7	MF	Brett Emerton	17(pk), 58	61		86	5	MF	Majdi Abdulla Siddiq				
8	MF	Luke Wilkshire					11	MF	Fábio César Montezine				83
11	MF	Scott Chipperfield				46	14	MF	Khalfan Ibrahim Khalfan Al-Khalfan				
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy	76				15	MF	Talal Hassan Ali Al-Bloushi		65		
10	FW	David Carney					12	FW	Magid Mohamed Hassan				
17	FW	Scott McDonald				68	18	FW	Andrés Sebastián Soria Quintana				84
SUBSTITUTES													
6	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak					1	GK	Qasem Abdulhamed Burhan				
12	GK	Michael Petkovic					4	DF	Ibrahim Abdulla Al-Ghanim				
13	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne					7	FW	Yusef Ahmed Ali		88		84
14	FW	Brett Holman				68	9	DF	Meshal Mubarak Budawood				
15	FW	Bruce Djite					10	MF	Mohammed Abdurabb Al-Yazeedi				
16	MF	Mile Sterjovski				46	16	MF	Hamid Ismaeil Hassan Khaleefa Hamid				46
18	MF	Jacob Burns				86	17	FW	Younes Ali Rahmati				83
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Bruno Metsu				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Khalil Ibrahim Al-Ghamdi (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Mohammed Hamad Al-Ghamdi (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Hamdi Al-Chikh Al-Kadri (Syrian Arab Republic)											

match report from the AFC

Brett Emerton once again proved the scoutage of Qatar as Australia made it six points out of six in the final round of World Cup qualifying with a comfortable 4-0 victory in Brisbane.

Emerton, who scored twice in a 3-1 win in Qatar in the previous stage, again claimed a brace while Tim Cahill scored on his international return and Josh Kennedy also got on the score sheet to complete a second consecutive Group One victory for Pim Verbeek's men.

The game was initially delayed by half-an-hour after a thunderstorm had drenched the Suncorp Stadium pitch and when play did finally get under way, Qatar lined up in a 4-5-1 formation looking to frustrate the home side.

Their plan, however, lay in tatters with just nine minutes gone as Australia took the lead.

Luke Wilkshire knocked the ball down the right looking for the run of David Carney and the midfielder flicked it on towards Kennedy.

Under pressure, the tall striker glanced the ball across to Cahill and the Everton midfielder rifled a left-foot finish across keeper Abdullah Abdulaziz and into the bottom corner from just inside the box.

Verbeek's side then doubled their lead just eight minutes later. Cahill and Kennedy exchanged headers before the former attempted to execute an acrobatic effort but was shoved in the back by Abdulla Koni and Saudi referee Khalil Al Ghamdi pointed to the spot.

Emerton's penalty was powerful enough to find the corner of the net despite Aziz getting a hand to it.

Qatar fashioned an excellent opening in the 42nd minute when Sebastian Soria split the home defence with a superb ball that played in strike partner Magid Hassan down the left-hand side of the area.

Hassan rolled a beautiful ball across the six-yard box but no Qatar player was on hand to convert.

Australia notched their third just before the hour mark with a flowing move. Scott McDonald stabbed the ball into the path of Kennedy and the striker fed the overlapping Emerton on the right with an excellent ball.

The Blackburn Rovers star drilled a shot across the Qatar keeper that found the back of the net via the far post.

Kennedy glanced Lucas Neill's cross just wide two minutes later before the striker claimed Australia's fourth with a quarter of an hour to go as he out-jumped Abdulaziz to head home Wilkshire's deep hanging ball from the right following some slick build-up.

Soria then hung his head in shame after 79 minutes as Khalfan Ibrahim turned Neill inside out before pulling the ball back to the striker but he fired embarrassingly over the bar from eight yards with an empty net begging to sum up Qatar's evening.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
19th. September 2008, 18.00			National Stadium, Riffa, Bahrain			Cool			20C		10000		
Bahrain..0 v. Australia..1													
half time, Bahrain..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Sayed Mohammed Jaffer					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Mohamed Husain Mohamed Hasain Bahzad (c)					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				
14	DF	Salman Isa Ghuloom					13	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne		53		69
16	DF	Sayed Mohamed Adnan Husain					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				86
17	DF	Hussain Ali Baba Mohammed				75	5	MF	Jason Culina				
4	MF	Abdulla Baba Fatadi					8	MF	Luke Wilkshire				
7	MF	Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Hubail					16	MF	Carl Valeri				
12	MF	Faouzi Mubarak Aaish					18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano	90+3			
13	MF	Mahmood Abdulrahman Mohammed Noor ("Ringo")				79	9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				
9	FW	A'ala Ahmed Mohamed Hubail				87	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				71
10	FW	Jaycee John Akwani Okwunwanne					11	FW	David Carney				
SUBSTITUTES													
3	MF	Abdulla Abdi Omar Yasser					3	DF	Jade North				69
5	FW	Abdulla Adnan Saleh Salman Al-Dakheel				87	6	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
6	DF	Abbas Saeed Ali Mansoor Ayyad					7	MF	Mile Sterjovski				86
8	MF	Rashid Abdulrahman Saif Abdulla Al-Dosari				79	12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
11	MF	Jamal Rashed Abdulrahman Yusuf				75	14	FW	Brett Holman				71
15	FW	Ebrahim Ali Hasan Meshkhas					15	FW	Bruce Djite				
18	GK	Abbas Ahmed Khamis Al-Tooq					17	DF	Shane Steffanuto				
Team Coach		Milan Macala					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Masoud Moradi Hasanali (Iraq)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hassan Kamranifar (Iraq)											
Assistant Referee 2		Luay Subhi Adib (Iraq)											

Sayed Mohammed Jaffer is also shown as Sayed Mohamed Jaafar Sabt Abbas, Said Ahmad Jaffer and Mohamed Al-Sayed Jaffer.

Abdulla Abdo Omar Yasser is also shown as Abdulla Abdi Omar Yasser

Hussain Ali Baba Mohammed is also shown as Husain Ali Hasan Ali Mohamed.

Abbas Ahmed Khamis Al-Toog is also shown as Abbas Ahned Ali Khamis.

match report from the FFA

Australia has produced the classic smash and grab raid on Bahrain, with Mark Bresciano scoring a dramatic last minute goal to break the hearts of the home players and supporters.

Down and outplayed by Bahrain for 92 minutes, Bresciano suddenly found himself in behind the Bahrain defence with just seconds left on the clock and after appearing to delay his shot too long, he kept his nerve to beat Sayed Jaafar and secure the 1-0 win.

The win maintains Australia's unbeaten start to the 2010 World Cup qualifiers - Round 4 and sees them maintain their lead at the top of the group standings, with a perfect nine points.

The result however was anything, but deserved for Australia, who struggled on the bumpy pitch and to contain a desperate Bahrain side that were battling for their World Cup lives. There is little doubt the Bahrain players would be shattered not to have got something from the game, after having much the better of the play throughout.

"No excuses," said a forthright Pim Verbeek, who continually cut a frustrated figure on the sidelines during the match. "Our preparation was good in the lead up to the game, but from the first moment on, we were not good enough. We should have done much better."

Asked if the win meant his team had one foot in the door to South Africa, he was fairly frank, "If we keep playing like this, no."

Despite missing four key players, Bahrain defied the odds and as the game wore on their confidence grew. Jaycee John was a constant handful for the Australian defence and had a number of chances, while across the park they outmuscled and outplayed their more illustrious opponents.

While Bresciano took the plaudits with his last minute winner, Australia can once again thank its No.1 Mark Schwarzer for keeping them in the game, as he made several saves in the first half to keep his side in the game.

In the 10th minute, Abdulla Fatadi weaved his way into the box and hit a fierce shot from an acute angle, which Schwarzer parried down.

Long balls were causing the Australian defence all sorts of problems, with John's strong physical presence giving Bahrain a threatening outlet.

In the 19th minute, he had the chance to give his side the lead, when he broke through into the penalty area, but his shot was well blocked by Schwarzer, who was clearly the busier of the two keepers.

Australia looked lethargic and too many times turned over cheap possession, while Kennedy was well shackled as the target man up front. The first real attempt on goal by Australia did not arrive until 39 minutes into the match, when Harry Kewell raced in to meet David Carney's cross, but he could only guide it wide of the goal from seven yards.

A minute either side of the halftime break, Salman Isa had chances to break the deadlock, the first, pulling his shot across the face of goal and the second hitting into the side-netting.

Australia looked a little better in the first fifteen minutes after the break and Carney had a golden opportunity to score after 59 minutes when he received a neat cutback from Kennedy. But Carney from only six yards out, blazed his shot into the side-netting.

From that moment on it was pretty much all Bahrain, as they pressed looking for the winning goal they so desperately needed.

John was inches away from connecting to an Isa cross in the 68th minute, while Fatadi's shot took a deflection and went wide for a corner in the 76th minute.

Bahrain coach Milan Micala threw caution to the wind, sending on attacking substitutes and Abdulla Aldakeel's introduction almost paid instant dividends in the 89th minute, when his shot on the turn went just wide of Schwarzer's near post.

However, just when Australia looked to be hanging on for dear life, somehow they managed to come up with a winner on the back of rare Bahrain mistake. Schwarzer's long clearance saw the ball come off a Bahrain head towards his own goal. Mohamed Husain's moment of hesitancy saw him lose control of the ball and Bresciano pounced to race into the box, keep himself composed and finished with aplomb, much to the shock of almost everyone inside the stadium.

Schwarzer did have to make one last ditch save to deny Bahrain a deserved equaliser to make it three wins from three matches and a step closer to South Africa in 2010.

The loss now sees Bahrain hopes of qualifying automatically for the finals almost disappear, but still remain in contention for the third place play-off.

In the other match, Japan proved too good for Qatar in Doha.

2009

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
28th January 2009, 19.30			Gelora Bung Karno Stadium, Jakarta, Indonesia				Hot and Humid			29C		50000	
Indonesia..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Indonesia..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Markus Harison Rihihina					82	GK	Eugen Galeković				
6	DF	Charis Yulianto (c)					3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				
25	DF	Isnani Ali					51	DF	Rodrigo Vargas				
28	DF	Richardo Salampessy					66	DF	Scott Jamieson		75		
37	DF	Maman Abdurahman		90			72	DF	Dean Heffernan				74
7	MF	Boas Theofilus Erwin Salossa				71	41	MF	Matthew McKay				
11	MF	Ponaryo Astaman					44	MF	Paul Reid				
15	MF	Firman Utina					83	MF	Tomislav Pondeljak				68
18	MF	Hariono					86	MF	Matthew Thompson				
9	FW	Abdul Mushafry Talaoahu		46		64	32	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson				
13	FW	Budi Sudarsono				83	33	FW	Daniel "Danny" Allsopp				57
SUBSTITUTES													
2	DF	Muhamad Roby					34	MF	Blagoja Celeski				68
3	DF	Erol Iba				83	47	FW	Matthew Blake Simon		90+1		57
8	MF	Elie Aiboy				64	49	DF	Nikolai David Topor-Stanley				
12	GK	Feri Rotin Sulu					69	DF	Tarek Elrich				
14	MF	Ismed Sofyan					77	FW	Dylan MacAllister				
20	FW	Bambang Pamungkas				71	88	GK	Daniel Vukovic				
30	DF	Nova Arianto					90	MF	Michael Zullo				74
Team Coach		Benny Dolo					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager		Andi Darussalam Tabusalla					Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Abdul Malik Abdul Bashir (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 1		Gek Pheng Jeffrey Goh (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 2		Nazeer Hussain Mohamed Haniffa (Singapore)											

match report from the AFC

Australia's qualification campaign for the 2011 AFC Asian Cup kicked-off with an entertaining 0-0 Group B draw against Indonesia at the Gelora Bung Karno on Wednesday.

Coach Pim Verbeek had named a side drawn exclusively from the domestic A-league and while the lack of goals could cause concern heading into the next fixture against Kuwait in March, the Dutchman will take heart in a display that earned a fourth consecutive clean sheet and proved their defensive capabilities.

Indonesia, meanwhile, were forced to settle for a second goalless draw following their stalemate in Oman.

Firman Utina had the first strike on goal when the Indonesian's 25-yard drive tested debutant goalkeeper Eugene Galekovich.

Melbourne Victory midfielder Tom Pondeljak then had a chance to open Australia's account in the 10th minute but the debutant lost his footing and Indonesia keeper Markus Horison was able to clear.

Danny Allsopp saw an opportunistic drive from 30 yards out fumbled by Horison five minutes later but the Indonesia keeper managed a scrambling recovery with no Australia strikers in attendance.

The best chance for either side fell to Indonesia in the 34th minute when Firman played in Abdulmushafry Talaoahu and the striker pulled off the shoulder of Matt Thompson in the right side of the area but pulled his shot across the face of goal with Galekovich struggling at the near post.

Australia were awarded a free-kick in first-half injury time and Paul Reid produced a pinpoint delivery into the area that caught out the Indonesian defence but Dean Heffernan headed the ball into the side netting.

Talaoahu then created another chance for Indonesia in the 62nd minute when his dogged run down the right wing resulted in a terrific cross across the face of goal that Galekovich failed to cut out.

Unfortunately for the hosts, Budi Sudarsono arrived just a fraction too late and could only head a clear-cut chance wide.

Striker Archie Thompson almost created the opener for Australia in the 66th minute when his jinking run through the Indonesian defence and resultant low drive at goal hit the turf and bounced out of Horison's hands into the path of Matt Simon. However, the ball fortuitously rolled back into the outstretched arms of Horison and with that, Australia's final chance was snuffed out.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
11th February 2009, 19.23			Yokohama International Stadium, Yokohama, Japan			Very Cold			7C		66000		
Japan..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Japan..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
18	GK	Ryota Tsuzuki					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	Yuji Nakazawa (c)					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)				
4	DF	Marcus Tūlio Tanaka					3	DF	Craig Moore				
6	DF	Atsuto Uchida					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				85
15	DF	Yuto Nagatomo					5	MF	Jason Culina				
7	MF	Yasuhito Endo					8	MF	Luke Wilkshire		26		
8	MF	Daisuke Matsui				57	11	MF	Scott Chipperfield		21		
10	MF	Shunsuke Nakamura					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				
17	MF	Makoto Hasebe					16	MF	Carl Valeri		90+1		
9	FW	Tatsuya Tanaka				83	18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				90+2
11	FW	Keiji Tamada					14	FW	Brett Holman				64
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Eiji Kawashima					6	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
3	DF	Shuhei Terada					7	FW	Richard Garcia				64
5	MF	Yasuyuki Konno					9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				85
12	FW	Seiichiro Maki					10	FW	David Carney				90+2
13	FW	Shinji Okazaki				83	12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
14	MF	Hashimoto Hideo					15	DF	Jade North				
16	FW	Yoshito Okubo				57	17	FW	Scott McDonald				
Team Coach		Takeshi Okada					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Mohsen Basma (Syrian Arab Republic)											
Assistant Referee 1		Tamam Hamdoun (Syrian Arab Republic)											
Assistant Referee 2		Mashhour Hamdan (Syrian Arab Republic)											

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos took another giant step towards a berth at the 2010 FIFA World Cup finals in South Africa, picking up a valuable point against Japan at the Yokohama International Stadium. The point maintains Australia's unbeaten run in Group A of the fourth round of qualifiers and with three of their final four matches at home, the Qantas Socceroos must be confident of reaching its second successive World Cup finals.

It wasn't pretty as expected, with Japan, backed by a capacity crowd of 70,000, dominating play for the most part, but time and again they were turned away by a magnificent Australian defence.

Australian coach Pim Verbeek was obviously delighted with the performance; especially given they had little to no preparation prior to the game.

"Fantastic performance," he said after the game. "I think 0-0 in Japan is really a great result. I think they had one real chance and that was the header, but for the rest it looks dangerous, but not very dangerous. It's reality that we had little preparation, but you could see how professional the players are. They are all very tired, but they stayed concentrated and I think they need to be complemented."

Verbeek was also not going to concede that Australia already had one foot in the door for South Africa.

"No, we still have to wait," he said. "We have a big game coming up now at ANZ (Stadium) in Sydney against Uzbekistan, but every game is a big game now and it depends on the result now in the Uzbekistan and Bahrain match being played tonight as to whether three points will be good enough in Sydney."

The result saw Australia jump to ten points, while Japan remains two points behind, with Qatar on four points and Uzbekistan and Bahrain on one point (prior to the result of their match being played later tonight).

Australia started as expected with Vince Grella and Scott Chipperfield taking their place in the team and Tim Cahill starting as a striker.

The first half as expected saw Japan dominate possession, although chances were fairly rare.

Keiji Tamada had the first chance in the 5th minute, his flick at the near post going into the side-netting, although Mark Schwarzer looked to have it covered.

The most threatening Japan got was the 3-4 occasions that set piece specialist Shunsuke Nakamura was over the ball at free kicks around the Australian penalty area. However, apart from one cross that took a deflection and made Mark Schwarzer sweat a little, before he took it comfortably, the goal was never really threatened.

Australia's one and only decent chance came right on half time, when Cahill finally got a metre of space and his shot from 25 metres was hit with tremendous power, but straight at Japanese keeper Ryota Tsuzuki.

Japan upped the ante in the second half and pushed forward with more urgency, but time and again they ran into a solid brick wall with Lucas Neill and Craig Moore superb in the middle.

Schwarzer, who became the third oldest player for the Qantas Socceroos with his appearance tonight, made his first save in the 68th minute, comfortably controlling a shot by substitute Yoshito Okubo.

Japan was now flying and two minutes later Schwarzer made his most telling save, pushing a Yasuhito Endo thunderbolt over the bar.

Tamada should have done better with a header in the 79th minute, but it flew well over the crossbar, while a Hasebe shot that hit Okubo went just wide of the near post, much to the Australians relief.

Josh Kennedy was injected into the match late on and was almost on the end of a terrific cross from Jason Culina, but Tūlio did enough to deny the tall striker.

Japan tried for a last winner, but Australia's rearguard held firm to get the point they wanted.

The 0-0 scoreline also meant Schwarzer became the holder of the most clean sheets (25) by a Socceroos keeper, moving ahead of long-time rival Zeljko Kalac.

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
5th March 2009, 20.00			Canberra Stadium, Canberra, A.C.T.			Good			14C		20032		
Australia..0 v. Kuwait..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. Kuwait..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
82	GK	Eugen Galekovic					22	GK	Nawaf Khaled Al-Khaldi				
3	DF	Craig Moore (c)				86	2	DF	Yaqoub Al-Taher Abdullah				
51	DF	Rodrigo Vargas					4	DF	Hussain Fadel Abdullah Ali				
107	DF	Daniel Mullen					13	DF	Mesaed Neda Al-Enazi	37			
41	MF	Matthew McKay					43	DF	Fahad Awadh Shaheen				
44	MF	Paul Reid				62	11	MF	Fahed Al-Ebrahim Al-Ansari				77
47	MF	Matthew Blake Simon		45+1			15	MF	Waleed Ali Jumah		73		86
83	MF	Tomislav Pondeljak					18	MF	Jarah Al-Ataiqi				
86	MF	Matthew Thompson					27	MF	Talal Ahmed Al-Amer				
90	MF	Michael Zullo		10		68	16	FW	Hamad Al-Enezi		59		65
32	FW	Archibald "Archie" Thompson					17	FW	Bader Ahmed Al-Mutwa				
SUBSTITUTES													
35	DF	Robert Cornthwaite				86	3	MF	Mohammad Jarragh				77
49	DF	Nikolai David Topor-Stanley					8	MF	Saleh Sheik Al-Hendi				86
69	DF	Tarek Elrich					9	FW	Ahmad Saad Ajab Al-Azmy				
72	DF	Dean Heffernan					10	FW	Khaled Ahmad Khalaf Matar				65
99	GK	Serafim Theoklitos					14	MF	Talal Naif Al-Enezi				
109	FW	Mitchell Nichols				62	21	GK	Hussain Kankone				
111	MF	Fabian Barbiero				68	51	DF	Ahmad Al-Eidan				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Goran Tufegdizic				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager		Osama Abdullah				
Referee		Masoud Moradi (Iran)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hassan Kamranifar (Iran)											
Assistant Referee 2		Heydar Shakour (Iran)											

Jarah Al-Ataiqi is also shown as Jarah Al Ateeqi, Bader Ahmed Al-Mutwa is also shown as Bader Al-Motawaa, and Ahmad Saad Ajab Al-Azmy is also shown as Ahnad Alzemi or Ahmad Al-Azemi,

match report from the AFC

A lucklastre Australia slumped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Kuwait to leave them rooted to the foot of their 2011 AFC Asian Cup qualifying group.

Following a drab goalless draw in Indonesia in January the Socceroos needed a win to put their campaign on track.

However, Pim Verbeek's side struggled for cohesion throughout and rarely troubled their opponents, who secured all three points through Masaed Al Enzi's 37th minute goal.

The win was Kuwait's first in Group B and moves them to second with three points whilst Australia are bottom with just one point.

Verbeek once again fielded a side made up entirely of A-league players after playing a similar side against Indonesia in Jakarta.

But they started slowly and it was Kuwait who produced the first real chance in the 16th minute when Al Enzi robbed the ball from Craig Moore, but his effort from the edge of the area was pushed behind for a corner by goalkeeper Eugene Galekovic.

That attempt seemed to wake Australia up and they should have opened the scoring after six minutes.

Archie Thompson capitalised on some poor defending and his deflected effort fell into the path of Tom Pondeljak but the Melbourne Victory midfielder's close-range effort was cleared off the line.

hosts were made to rue that miss in the 37th minute as Kuwait opened the scoring when defender Al Enzi headed home from a free-kick with the Australia defence stranded.

The Socceroos appeared to be struggling for ideas going forward and their only response before the break was a weak Pondeljak shot that goalkeeper Nawaf Al Khaldi easily saved.

They began the second half brightly, however, but were struggling to break through a packed Kuwait defence with Moore and Matt Simon managing just half chances.

But, despite appearing content to sit on their slender lead, Kuwait were still dangerous on the break and Bader Al Mutwa was allowed to dribble into the box unchallenged in the 69th minute only to send his shot over the bar.

Simon headed wide of the post from close range in the 77th minute but it was Kuwait who came closest to extending their lead a minute later as a mistake from Galekovic allowed Khaled Matar a chance on goal but his low shot struck the post.

Australia were becoming desperate as the game entered the closing stages and resorted to sending long balls into the box and though Mitch Nichols should have done better with a shot from the edge of the area, Kuwait defended resolutely to secure a deserved victory.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
1st April 2009, 20.00			Stadium Australia, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)			Raining intermittently			23C		57292		
Australia..2 v. Uzbekistan..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Uzbekistan..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					12	GK	Ignatiy Nesterov				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)		50			2	DF	Anvar Gafurov		90+4		
5	MF	Jason Culina					3	DF	Hayrulla Karimov				75
6	MF	Michael Beauchamp					5	DF	Anzur Ismailov				
8	MF	Luke Wilkshire		41			13	DF	Sakhob Jurayev		25		
10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell	73(pk)			75	4	MF	Aziz Ibragimov				65
11	MF	Scott Chipperfield					6	MF	Jasur Hasanov				
16	MF	Carl Valeri				82	8	MF	Server Djeparov (c)				
18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano					9	MF	Odil Ahmedov				
13	FW	Richard Garcia					10	MF	Farhod Tadjiyev				58
17	FW	Scott McDonald				61	18	MF	Timur Kapadze				
SUBSTITUTES													
3	FW	David Carney					1	GK	Temur Juraev				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill					7	MF	Azizbek Haydarov				65
7	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				82	11	FW	Anvarjon Soliev				58
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy	66			61	14	MF	Vitaliy Denisov				
12	GK	Michael Petkovic					15	DF	Islom Tuhtahujaev				75
14	FW	Brett Holman				75	16	DF	Ilhomjon Suyunov				
15	DF	Jade North					17	FW	Shakhboz Erkinov				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Kasimov Mirdjalal				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Ali Hamad Madhad Saif Albaadwawi (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 1		Almehairi Mohamed Jasem Saif Hamad Aljalaf (United Arab Emirates)											
Assistant Referee 2		Ahmad Nasser Bahrooz Saqer (United Arab Emirates)											

match report from the ABC

The Socceroos brought themselves to within touching distance of World Cup qualification with a 2-0 win over Uzbekistan in Sydney on Wednesday evening.

Goals from Josh Kennedy and Harry Kewell meant Australia had 13 points from five qualifiers, leaving the team top of its group. If Bahrain and Qatar were to draw later in the evening, Australia would be guaranteed a spot at next year's tournament in South Africa.

In front of 57,292 fans Australia missed a few chances in the first half and were lucky not to go behind, but a composed second-half performance killed off the visitors' challenge.

Tim Cahill started on the bench and failed to make an appearance for the Socceroos, but team-mate Mark Bresciano overcame some doubts over his fitness to make an immediate impression.

He set up Scott McDonald in the penalty area in the fourth minute, but the Celtic striker could not get his low shot past Uzbekistan goal-keeper Ignatiy Nesterov.

Bresciano had an even better chance 10 minutes later when he was one-on-one with Nesterov, but again the ball was fired straight into the hands of the keeper.

Uzbekistan had two great chances in the ninth minute via Farhod Tadjiyev.

He was put through with a wonderful ball in the ninth minute and Australia was lucky not to go one down when he shot his powerful, low shot wide of the left-hand post.

Seconds earlier he had spurned another chance to trouble goal-keeper Mark Schwarzer, thanks to a timely challenge from Australian captain Lucas Neill.

Bresciano was the next to spurn a great chance in the 16th minute when he was one-on-one with Uzbek keeper, but he sent his powerful shot straight into the hands Nesterov.

Harry Kewell and Bresciano worked hard and both managed to work their way into space, and were the best players for the home side in the first half.

Uzbekistan obviously came prepared for a physical challenge, but their aggressive approach led to Sakhob Juraev being the first recipient of a yellow card when his clumsy challenge that brought down Richard Garcia on 24 minutes.

Australia started brighter in the second half, and spent most of it putting pressure on the Uzbek defence.

Kewell almost produced a moment of brilliance in the 53rd minute when Garcia looped a cross over to the right hand-side, but even though the Galatasaray winger's volley was on target, it cannoned off the shins of the Uzbekistan defender.

The visitors were close to rebounding for a counter-attack goal of their own after that opportunity, and it was Tadjiyev again who sent a strike screaming past the left-hand post after Timur Kapadze set him up on the edge of the box.

Australia proceeded to lay siege to the Uzbekistan goal, and a spectacular save was all that denied the home team in the 56th minute.

Jason Culina hit a sweet strike from 15 yards out, but Nesterov managed to get an outstretched hand to the swerving ball.

Wave after wave of Australian attack followed and coach Pim Verbeek's decision to replace McDonald with Kennedy on the hour mark paid off after just seven minutes.

Bresciano sprinted into space and curled an inviting cross from the right-hand side to Kennedy in the 67th minute, who aimed his glancing header down towards the near post and into the back of the net.

If the Sydney crowd had been starved of goals up until that point, they were spoilt afterwards when Hayrulla Karimov was judged to have fouled Richard Garcia in the area.

Nesterov chose correctly and dived left but Kewell's penalty was too well taken and the low strike went past the keepers' outstretched hands.

Uzbekistan had a chance to score in the 89th minute when Server Djeparov's shot bounced out of Schwarzer's hands, but Anvarjon Soliev's apparent goal was ruled off-side.

Neill says he is very proud of the team's effort.

"It was massive," he said. "Another clean sheet, a rusty first half but in the second half we put a lot of pressure on. We've sent a statement out to the rest of the group and possibly the world that we might be the first team to qualify for the World Cup."

Harry Kewell told Fox Sports it will be hard for the team to keep a lid on their emotions but he says the job is still not done.

"We've still got three games left so we want to make sure we win all of them and get through properly," he said.

Kewell says he is feeling fit, both mentally and physically, but he was quick to deflect any personal accolades.

"I can be better ... but it was all about the result tonight," he said. "We worked hard together and we got the result that we needed."

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
6th June 2009, 19.00			Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium (Al-Sadd), Doha, Qatar			Very hot and humid			38C		7000		
Qatar..0 v. Australia..0													
half time, Qatar..0 v. Australia..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
2	GK	Qasem Abdullhamed Burhan					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
3	DF	Hamed Shami Zaher		26			2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)		90		
6	DF	Bilal Mohammed Rajab					6	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				
8	DF	Mesaad Ali Al-Hamad					11	DF	Scott Chipperfield				
13	DF	Ibrahim Majid Abdulmajid					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				90+2
10	MF	Mohammed Abdulrabb Al-Yazeedi					5	MF	Jason Culina				
15	MF	Talal Ali Hassan Al-Bloushi		90			10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
9	FW	Ali Hassan Afif Yahya				77	16	MF	Carl Valeri				
12	FW	Magid Mohammed Hassan				83	18	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				77
16	FW	Ahmed Ali Faris Al-Binali				62	9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				
18	FW	André Sebastián Soria Quintana (c)		78			13	FW	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				73
SUBSTITUTES													
1	GK	Mohamed Ahmed Saqr					3	FW	David Carney				
4	DF	Musa Haroon Jama					7	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
5	MF	Maji Abdulla Siddiq				62	8	FW	Richard Garcia				90+2
7	DF	Ali Nasser Saleh					12	GK	Michael Petkovic				
11	FW	Hassan Khalid Al-Haidos					14	FW	Brett Holman				77
14	FW	Yusef Ahmad Ali				83	15	DF	Jade North				73
17	FW	Mohammed Yasser Mohammadi				77	17	FW	Scott McDonald				
Team Coach		Bruno Metsu					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Abdul Malik Bin Abdul Bashir (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 1		Goh Gek Pheng Jeffrey (Singapore)											
Assistant Referee 2		Lutfi Emir (Singapore)											

Ibrahim Majid Abdulmajid is also shown as Ibrahim Majed Abdullmajed, and Mohammed Yasser Mohammadi is also shown as Mohammed Mohamady.

match report from the FFA

Australia booked a ticket to the 2010 FIFA World Cup finals in South Africa with a scoreless draw against a determined Qatar at the Al Sadd Club in Doha on Saturday night.

Needing only a point to officially seal qualification, the Qantas Socceroos got the job done against a youthful Qatar side to ensure back-to-back World Cup appearances for the first time.

The home side proved tougher opposition than they had in three previous losses, but Australia could feel unlucky not to have won after Tim Cahill struck the post with a spectacular bicycle kick in the first half and

Qatari keeper Qasem Burhan made several brilliant saves in the second.

The win means the Qantas Socceroos cannot finish any lower than second in Asia's Group A, with the top two teams earning qualification.

They joined Asian rivals Japan as the first two sides to qualify for next year's tournament, after the Blue Samurai sealed their spot with a 1-0 win over Uzbekistan earlier on Saturday.

Hosts South Africa are exempt from qualifying.

Both sides made a tentative start in front of a small but vocal Doha crowd, with the Qantas Socceroos content to keep possession in the hot and humid conditions.

Qatar's star striker Sebastian Soria Quintana looked dangerous early on and had the first real chance of the half after getting in behind Chris Coyne, but he flashed his shot across the face of goal.

The Qantas Socceroos muscled their way back into the game before Cahill was denied one of the great goals by the woodwork in the 27th minute.

Josh Kennedy, who impressed up front, flicked on a Mark Bresciano free kick with his head, before Cahill found himself in space, controlled with his chest and drilled an overhead kick into the right upright.

Harry Kewell became increasingly menacing after switching to the right wing, going close to scoring himself before creating another move which led to Vince Grella firing a volley just over the bar in the 33rd minute.

Qatar had two chances late in the half with Cahill blocking Quintana's effort and Mark Schwarzer punching away an ambitious long shot from Ahmed Faris.

Australia stepped up their game early in the second half with a flush of chances within a ten-minute period.

The first came to an unlikely source in defender Chris Coyne, who had his shot cleared off the line after attempting to turn in a headed Cahill effort.

The impressive Everton midfielder again hit another stunner when his powerful drive was brilliantly saved in the 57th minute by Burhan.

Burhan was called into action again to tip over a Kennedy shot from out wide and once more in the 63rd minute when Kewell collected a brilliant Grella ball; cut inside Ibrahim Majed and forced another great save by Burhan with his right foot.

Kewell continued to threaten and fired across the face of goal in the 80th minute and although they didn't get the goal they perhaps deserved, it meant little when the whistle blew to ensure another historic World Cup appearance.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
10th June 2009, 20.00			Stadium Australia, Homebush Bay, Sydney, New South Wales (Sydney Olympic Stadium)			Cold			9C		39540		
Australia..2 v. Bahrain..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Bahrain..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Sayed Mohammed Jaffer				
2	DF	Mark Milligan		63			3	DF	Abdulla Abdulrahman Al-Marzooqi				
6	DF	Christopher "Chris" Coyne				73	14	DF	Salman Isa Ghuloom				90+2
5	MF	Jason Culina					17	DF	Hussain Ali Baba Mohammed				
7	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak		34		63	2	MF	Abdulla Abdi Omar Yasser				87
8	MF	Luke Wilkshire		89			7	MF	Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Hubail				
16	MF	Mile Sterjovski					10	MF	Mohamed Ahmed Yusuf Salmeen (c)				
3	FW	David Carney	88				12	MF	Faouzi Mubarak Aaish		69		76
10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell (c)					13	MF	Mahmood Abdulrahman Mohamed Noor ("Ringo")				
14	FW	Brett Holman				84	15	MF	Abdullah Omar Ismail				
17	FW	Scott McDonald					8	FW	Jaycee John Akwani Okwunwanne				
SUBSTITUTES													
4	MF	Jacob Burns					4	FW	Ahmed Hassan Talib				87
9	FW	Bruce Djite					5	FW	Abdulla Adnan Saleh Salman Aldakeel				
11	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				84	6	FW	Dawood Saad Salman Mohamed Saad				
12	GK	Michael Petkovic					9	MF	Sayed Ali Isa Hasan Radhi Hashem				
13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				63	11	FW	Ismaeel Hassan Abdul-Latif				76
15	DF	Jade North				73	16	MF	Abdulwahab Ali Abdulwahab Husain Alsafi				90+2
16	DF	Shane Stefanutto					18	GK	Abbas Ahmed Ali Khamis Aal Tooq				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Milan Macala				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Al Hilali Abdullah Mohamed Masoud (Oman)											
Assistant Referee 1		Al Rashdi Salim Gharib Akaba (Oman)											
Assistant Referee 2		Saleh Mohamed Abdulla Hasan Al Marzouqi (United Arab Emirates)											

Sayed Mohammed Jaffer is also shown as Sayed Mohamed Jaafar Sabt Abbas, Said Ahmad Jaffer and Mohamed Al-Sayed Jaffer.
Abdulla Abdulrahman Al-Marzooqi is also shown as Abdulla Abdulrahman Mohamed Marzooq and Abdulla Al-Marzooqi. Salman Isa Ghuloom is also shown as Salman Isa Ghuloom Ali
Hussain Ali Baba Mohammed is also shown as Husain Ali Hasan Ali Mohamed.
Abdullah Omar Ismail is also shown as Abdulla Ismaeel Omar.
Ahmed Hassan Taleb is also shown as Ahmed Hassan Taleb Mohamed Rashed and Ahmed Hassan Talib.

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos have celebrated their second successive FIFA World Cup appearance with a hard fought 2-0 win over Bahrain at Stadium Australia on Wednesday night.

In frosty conditions at the venue of Australia's most famous FIFA World Cup qualifying success, the home side were stoic and disciplined but effective when needed and justifiably claimed all three points thanks to Mile Sterjovski and David Carney's second half strikes.

39,540 braved the winter cold in Sydney's west and would have walked away contented with another example of the typically professional performances the Qantas Socceroos have become renowned for.

Versatile Dynamo Moscow player Luke Wilkshire headlined a seven-strong contingent of new faces in Australia's starting eleven, which was weakened by the absence of lynchpin squad members Mark Bresciano, Tim Cahill and Lucas Neill.

Brett Holman's snap on goal from distance after ten minutes was Australia's first sight on goal, though Bahraini custodian Sayed Mohammed Jaffer saved comfortably.

The best chance of the first half for either side would soon fall to Scott McDonald.

McDonald, in the Qantas Socceroos' starting side at the expense of injured marksman Josh Kennedy, hurriedly blazed over from the fringe of the penalty area with the goal at his mercy.

The Celtic striker was put through on goal by Holman, who in his first start since February's stalemate against Japan in Yokohama was among Australia's best throughout a fairly tame opening stanza where the home side largely struggled to break down their stubborn opponents.

Notably energised and refreshed after the break, Australia loomed as the most likely to open the scoring after the resumption and duly did so on 55 minutes from the boot of Sterjovski.

Carney instigated the move from just inside Australia's attacking half, where he slipped a pass to fellow left-winger Harry Kewell, whose first time touch found Sterjovski after Bahrain defender Faouzi Aaish made a hash of his clearance.

The Derby County attacker made no mistake from close range in hooking home an accurate left footed strike on the volley - his eighth goal in green and gold and first of Australia's march towards South Africa.

Bahrain's position was now one of desperation, with the visitors yearning for a share of the spoils to ensure third place in Group A and subsequent progression to the next stage of qualification in Asia.

Consequently, the match opened up considerably and the increasingly dominant Qantas Socceroos enjoyed far greater freedom and were able to showcase their talents.

Kewell was a standout going forward and were it not for some perhaps wasteful finishing and lamentable decision making in the final third, Australia could well have extended their advantage prior to Carney's match sealer.

Carney was again key to the build up of a movement that he would finish with aplomb, but not before Jason Culina's outstanding overhead kick crashed off the upright and into his path.

Culina - bound for Hyundai A-League expansion club Gold Coast United in 2009/10 - was as ever one of Australia's strongest performers and deserved much of the credit for Carney's goal in light of what was a truly spectacular effort.

At the full time whistle, Australia could reflect on a diligent showing that keeps them in pole position to claim top spot in Group A ahead of next Wednesday's all-star finale against fellow regional powerhouses Japan.

World Cup, 4th. Qualifying Round - Asian zone													
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance		
17th June 2009, 20.20			Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Victoria			Cold			9C		69238		
Australia..2 v. Japan..1													
half time, Australia..0 v. Japan..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					1	GK	Seigo Narazaki				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					4	DF	Marcus Túlio Tanaka	39			
3	DF	Shane Stefanutto					6	DF	Atsuto Uchida				
18	DF	Jade North					15	DF	Yuto Nagatomo				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	59, 77			84	2	MF	Yuki Abe				
5	MF	Jason Culina					7	MF	Hideo Hashimoto				84
11	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				77*	8	MF	Yasuyuki Konno				
13	MF	Vincenzo Grella					10	MF	Daisuke Matsui				67
16	MF	Mile Sterjovski					14	MF	Kengo Nakamura				
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy					9	FW	Shinji Okazaki				
14	FW	Rhys Williams				77	11	FW	Keiji Tamada				
SUBSTITUTES													
6	DF	Matthew Spironovic					3	DF	Yuichi Komano				
7	FW	Bruce Djite					5	DF	Satoshi Yamaguchi				
8	MF	Jacob Burns				77	12	FW	Kisho Yano				67
10	MF	Dario Vidosic				84	13	FW	Shinzo Koroki				84
12	GK	Michael Petkovic					16	GK	Eiji Kawashima				
15	DF	Adrian Madaschi					17	DF	Tomoaki Makino				
17	FW	Scott McDonald				77*	18	GK	Ryota Tsuzuki				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Oki Takeshi				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Ibrahim M. Alghamdi Khalil (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 1		Hamad S.Alghamdi Mohammed (Saudi Arabia)											
Assistant Referee 2		Alkadri Hamdi Alchikh (Syrian Arab Republic)											

match report from Japan Today

Tim Cahill scored two second-half goals as Australia beat Japan 2-1 on Wednesday to finish the last round of Asian World Cup qualifying with an unbeaten record.

Both Japan and Australia had already booked their berths for South Africa 2010 ahead of the final qualifier and only top place in Group 1 was at stake.

Australia ended qualifying atop the group with 20 points, five clear of second-place Japan, and conceded only one goal in eight matches.

Everton midfielder Cahill reproduced his performance from the 2006 World Cup group match against Japan in Germany, when he scored twice to guide Australia to a remarkable comeback win.

He did it again in front of an estimated 70,000 fans at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Japan dominated much of a lackluster first half before unmarked Marcus Tulio Tanaka darted forward to head in a Kengo Nakamura corner in the 40th minute.

The Australians went on the attack early in the second half and were rewarded when Cahill equalized in the 59th after rising in the box to nod in a floated Vince Grella free kick.

Cahill capped a man-of-the-match performance in the 77th when he eluded the Japan defense to gather a Nicky Carle corner and knock the ball past Japan 'keeper Seigo Narazaki.

Cahill was back in the side after skipping last week's match against Bahrain with muscle soreness. Lucas Neill, who missed last week's match while serving a suspension, was also back for Australia.

"It's starting to sink in now. It's been a great campaign by everyone," Neill said. "This is great reward in front of a great crowd."

Australia's best scoring opportunity of the first half came in the 7th minute when a powerful shot from midfielder Mile Sterjovski was deflected over the bar by Narazaki. Cahill attempted to head in the resulting corner moments later, but it went wide.

Japan engineered several attacking forays in the Australian half, but its best chance came in the 19th minute when a Shinji Okazaki strike sailed over the bar after Fulham keeper Mark Schwarzer sliced a clearing kick.

Neill prevented another Japanese goal moments before halftime when a he headed away a free kick from the goal line after Nakamura's spot kick beat Schwarzer.

"We had a great campaign," Australia coach Pim Verbeek said. "It's fantastic for Australian football. I'm very proud of my players."

The top two teams in Groups A and B advance directly to the finals. The two third-placed sides meet in a playoff, with the winner of that two-leg tie to take on Oceania champions New Zealand for a ticket to South Africa. The draw for the 2010 finals, being hosted by nine cities across South Africa from June 11-July 11, is set to be held in Cape Town in December.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
12th August 2009, 19.30			Thomond Park, Limerick, Republic of Ireland				Fine					19428	
Republic of Ireland..0 v. Australia..3													
half time, Republic of Ireland..0 v. Australia..2													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Shay Given				68	1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
2	DF	John O'Shea					3	DF	David Carney	90+3			
3	DF	Kevin Kilbane				62*	5	DF	Jade North				71
4	DF	Sean St.Ledger					12	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				46**
5	DF	Richard Dunn		74			20	DF	Rhys Williams				
6	MF	Glenn Whelan					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	38, 44			46*
7	MF	Aiden McGeady				81	6	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				89
8	MF	Darren Gibson				62	8	MF	Luke Wilshire				
9	FW	Kevin Doyle				46*	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				78
10	FW	Robert "Robbie" Keane					7	FW	Scott McDonald				46
11	FW	Damian Duff				46	10	FW	Harold "Harry" Kewell				
SUBSTITUTES													
16	GK	Keiren Westwood				68	11	FW	Nikita Rukavytsya				46
12	DF	Eddie Nolan				62*	14	MF	Brett Holman				46*
15	MF	Keith Andrews				62	15	DF	Matthew Spiranovic				71
17	MF	Stephen Hunt				46	17	DF	Adrian Madaschi				46**
18	FW	Caleb Folan				46*	19	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				78
20	FW	Shane Long				81	21	MF	James Holland				89
Team Coach							Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager		Giovanni Trapattoni					Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee		Alfonso Perez Burrul (Spain)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from the Limerick Leader

Between fingers over our eyes on Wednesday night we watched Australia beat the Republic of Ireland to within an inch of their lives leaving Giovanni Trapattoni's side begging for the whistle on humanitarian grounds. While it was a joy to watch Pim Verbeek's side stroke the ball effortlessly across a pristine Thomond Park and threaten Shay Given's goal at will, the Republic's flaccid performance will concern Irish supporters ahead of their crucial World Cup qualifier against Cyprus on September 5 in Nicosia - three days later the Republic will return to Thomond Park to face South Africa (Tuesday, September 8) in another international friendly. Ireland were well and truly out-classed at Thomond Park, humiliatingly exposed to the world like a naked man caught in the shower after the rest of his house has collapsed all around him, with Tim Cahill in rude good form, were the far superior outfit leaving the Irish players to stagger off to their loser's dressing room, disconcerted and a probably feeling a little sick.

Two first half strikes from Tim Cahill and a late David Carney effort from 30 yards gave Australia their deserved win.

The Socceroos were the first to threaten in the seventh minute when Tim Cahill and Harry Kewell combined before the ball finally broke to Luke Wilkshire who pulled his low shot just wide. Mere seconds later Harry Kewell's effort drew an excellent save from Shay Given and the alarm bells were ringing.

Following Aiden McGeady's cross in the 13th minute Robbie Keane did bring the home support to its feet, but Keane's looping header flew two feet clear of the bar.

Such Irish attacks were only of a token nature in the opening half.

In the 22nd minute Patrick Kisnorbo connected with Mark Bresciano's pin-point corner and drew another good save out of Shay Given before Robbie Keane, following good work by Aiden McGeady on the left flank, tricked his way past a couple of defenders, but could not beat Mark Schwarzer at his near post.

Finally Australia's ambitious brand of football earned a dividend in the 38th minute. When an Irish corner was hacked clear by the Australian defence toward Tim Cahill on the half-way line there appeared to be little danger. The Everton star however turned, exchanged passes with Glasgow Celtic's Scott McDonald, and then unleashed a rasping shot from 20 yards which flew by Shay Given's out-stretched right hand to give the Socceroos a deserved lead.

A deathly hush fell around Thomond Park, which made the celebrating Australian players look like disrespectful children playing at a funeral - patrons of that famous old ground are not used to seeing the home side surrender so meekly.

Australia, who were the second side (behind Japan) to qualify for next summer's World Cup, doubled their lead a minute before half time.

This time right-back Rhys Williams proved the Republic's chief tormentor, Williams waltzed past Aiden McGeady and barged his way into the 18-yard box before turning onto his left and firing in a shot which Shay Given did exceptionally well to parry. Unfortunately Tim Cahill was hovering nearby and happily tapped in his second goal of the evening.

Ireland attempted to redress the balance in the second half. Giovanni Trapattoni introduced a lively Stephen Hunt to the side while he also swapped Eddie Nolan for Kevin Kilbane and Keith Andrews for Darron Gibson. All three substitutions significantly improved the Irish side, but the Republic still failed to change the complexion of this game in any material way.

In the 49th minute Mark Schwarzer did well to palm away Stephen Hunt's effort while Australia's Brett Holman stung the hands of Shay Given from distance in the 55th.

With Stephen Hunt growing into his role as chief tormentor of the Australians there was hope of a consolation goal for Ireland, but when the Hull City winger fired wide from well inside the 18-yard box on the hour mark notable groans emanated from a now impatient home crowd.

Sean St.Ledger almost stole in for goal following Stephen Hunt's 77th minute corner, but the misfortunate centre-half mistimed his effort slightly and the opportunity to score was spurned.

Australia's Harry Kewell, with nine minutes of normal time remaining, beat sub 'keeper Kieran Westwood with a flashing drive in the 81st minute, but unfortunately for Kewell his sensational effort drifted just wide.

The Republic had their eager supporters on their feet once more in the 88th minute when Eddie Nolan picked out Keith Andrews loitering on the edge of the Australian box - Andrews fired in a terrific shot which curled around the Socceroos' 'keeper Mark Schwarzer, but found a post and was cleared to safety.

Then, in the 93rd minute, Australia's David Carney, the left-back mind, conjured a wonderful goal. The combination of Luke Wilkshire and Nick Carle worked the ball out to Carney who took aim from fully 31 yards and planted an extraordinary shot in Kieran Westwood's top right-hand corner. A brilliant goal and a fitting end to an historic night at Thomand Park.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
5th September 2009,			Seoul World Cup Stadium, Seoul, South Korea				Fine					30000	
Korea Republic..3 v. Australia..1													
half time, Korea Republic..2 v. Australia..1													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Lee Woon-Jae (c)					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer				
4	DF	Cho Yong-Hyung					3	DF	Shane Stefanutto				
8	DF	Kim Jin-Kyu				62	4	DF	Jade North		35		
12	DF	Lee Young-Pyo					17	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo	34			
14	DF	Lee Jung-Soo	20				5	MF	Jason Culina				
7	MF	Park Ji-Sung					13	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella		74		
15	MF	Kim Do-Heon					14	MF	Brett Holman				61
16	MF	Ki Sung-Yueng				56	16	MF	Mark Milligan				81
10	FW	Park Chu-Young	5			80	23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				
17	FW	Lee Chun-Soo				71	7	FW	Scott McDonald				
20	FW	Lee Dong-Gook				56*	9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				
SUBSTITUTES													
18	GK	Jung Sung-Ryong					12	GK	Ante Covic				
21	GK	Kim Yong-Dae					6	DF	Michael Beauchamp				
2	DF	Oh Bum-Seok					10	MF	Dario Vidošić				
3	DF	Kang Min-Soo					11	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle				61
5	MF	Kim Nam-I l				71	20	DF	Matthew Spiranovic				81
6	MF	Cho Won-Hee				62, 90		MF	Rhys Williams				
9	FW	Seol Ki-Hyun	87			56		FW	Nikita Rukavytsya				
11	FW	Lee Keun-Ho				80		MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				
13	DF	Kim Chang-Soo											
19	FW	Yeom Ki-Hun				56*							
22	DF	Kim Hyung- i l											
23	DF	Lee Jung-Ho				90							
Team Coach		Jung-Moo Huh					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek				
Team Manager							Team Manager		Gary Moretti				
Referee													
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

Lee Jung-Ho was renamed Lee Won-Young in 2013.

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos have lost 3-1 to Korea Republic in their friendly international played at the Seoul World Cup Stadium on Saturday night.

A poor start proved costly for Australia and they were always chasing the game against a Korean side that has now gone 26 games unbeaten.

Korea opened the scoring after five minutes through Park Chu-Young and doubled the lead in the 21st minute with a goal from Lee Jung-Soo.

Australia got itself back into the game in the 35th minute, Patrick Kisnorbo heading home a Mark Bresciano free kick.

After dominating the second half, the Koreans killed off the game in the 87th minute, when Seol Ki-Hyun headed home a great cross from Park Ji-Sung

The first 30 minutes was all Korea Republic as Australia failed to get to grips with a poor pitch and the slick Korean passing and pressing game.

It took just five minutes for Korea to score, capitalising on a mistake by Shane Stefanutto, who tried to keep Jason Culina's wayward pass in from going out for a throw-in. He only succeeded in playing the ball to

Lee Chung-Yong, who strode forward with purpose and played the perfect ball in behind the defence to Park Chu-Young, who slid his shot past Schwarzer from six yards.

Australia's first shot came after 14 minutes when McDonald went close with a shot from the corner of the box that went just wide of the far post.

Schwarzer was nearly embarrassed in the 19th minute, when he almost let a Park Chu-Young shot over the goal line but recovered to take at the second attempt.

Two minutes later though, Schwarzer was beaten again, when Lee Jung-Soo was left unmarked close to goal to flick home from a well-worked set play.

Both sides traded half chances with Mark Schwarzer making a good save from Ki Sung-Yueng, before Kisnorbo stepped up and brought Australia back into the game, heading home Bresciano's free kick.

Korea was looking threatening in the early stages of the second half and Kim Dong-Jin forced Schwarzer into a scrambling save from his header.

Kennedy then went close to an equaliser, heading wide a long throw by Milligan.

From then on it was all Australia, Stefanutto almost scoring a screamer with a left foot volley that Lee Woon-Jae tipped over the bar and then five minutes later the keeper tipped a Mark Bresciano free kick over the bar.

With Australia pressing, Korea once again capitalised on an Australian turnover in the middle of the park, Park Ji-Sung released on the left. The Manchester United star then showed his class laying on the perfect cross for Seol Ki-Hyun whose downward header just got across the line before Mark Schwarzer could claw it back.

Kennedy almost snatched a late goal for Australia, his header from Bresciano's dangerous free kick, striking the post.

Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
10th October 2009,			Sydney Football Stadium, Moore Park, New South Wales				Fine					40537	
Australia..0 v. Netherlands..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Netherlands..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer						GK	Maarten Stekelenburg				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)						DF	Khalid Boulahrouz				
3	DF	Craig Moore				47		DF	John Heitinga				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				48		DF	Joris Mathijsen				
5	MF	Jason Culina						DF	Antun Kovacic				78
10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell						MF	Demy de Zeeuw				80
	MF	Vincenzo "Vince" Grella				14		MF	Dirk Kuyt				47
14	MF	Brett Holman						MF	Stijn Schaars		37		62
8	FW	Luke Wilkshire						FW	Dirk "Klaas-Jan" Huntelaar				
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy				47*		FW	Wesley Sneijder				67
	FW	David Carney						FW	Eljero Elia				
SUBSTITUTES													
	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				47		DF	Edson Braafheid				78
	MF	Brett Emerton				48		MF	David Mendes da Silva Gonçalves				80
	MF	Dario Vidosic				47*		FW	Ryan Babel				47
	MF	Carl Valeri		61		14, 72		MF	Orlando Engelaar				62
	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				72		MF	Rafael van der Vaart				67
	DF	Scott Chipperfield						GK	Michel Vorm				
	DF	Rhys Williams						GK	Piet Velthuisen				
	GK	Ante Covic											
	MF	Nicholas "Nick" Carle											
	MF	Mark Milligan											
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Bert van Marwijk				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager						
Referee		Tojo Minoru (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1													
Assistant Referee 2													

match report from the FFA

The Qantas Socceroos have held European powerhouse, the Netherlands, to a 0-0 draw in a hard-fought international friendly played in front of 40,537 fans at the Sydney Football Stadium.

While the Dutch, ranked third in the world, created the best of the chances they were unable to breach the resolute Australian defence.

The result extends Australia's unbeaten record against the Dutch to three matches having now managed a win and two draws against coach Pim Verbeek's countrymen.

It's the first time in 27 matches the Orange have failed to score a goal.

The competitive encounter will serve as the perfect preparation for Wednesday's crucial Asian Cup qualifier against Oman at Etihad Stadium.

Both coaches employed a 4-2-3-1 formation to start the clash but it was the visitors, wearing an all-blue strip in place of their traditional orange, who enjoyed the better of the opening exchanges.

Persistent rain made conditions tough for both sides but the Dutch looked right at home from the opening whistle.

Liverpool star Dirk Kuyt fired the first warning shot of the contest when he sent a dangerous cross into the box from the right for Klass Jan Huntelaar who sent his header over the bar.

Huntelaar was on the receiving end of another golden chance two minutes later but again failed to make the hosts pay after getting in behind the Australian defence.

The hosts were dealt a blow in the 16th minute whwn Vince Grella was forced from the field with a thigh injury with Carl Valeri inserted into the action.

While the Qantas Socceroos struggled to find their rhythm in attack the visitors continued to threaten with Wesley Sneijder forcing a 20th-minute save from Mark Schwarzer before Khalid Boulahrouz hit the side netting less than a minute later.

Brett Holman fired Australia's first shot in anger in the 24th minute forcing a regulation save from Maarten Stekelenburg in the Dutch goal.

The visitors answered almost immediately when a diving Demy de Zeeuw forced another save from Schwarzer as the teams headed into the break locked at 0-0.

Pim Verbeek made three changes to start the second half with Brett Emerton, Patrick Kisnorbo and Dario Vidosic replacing Josh Kennedy, Craig Moore and Tim Cahill.

The visitors made just the one substitution with Kuyt making way for club team-mate Ryan Babel.

Despite the change in personnel it was more of the same to start the second stanza with the Oranje continuing to pressure the hosts, Eljero Elia finding the target twice in the opening thirteen minutes but Schwarzer was again up to the task.

Huntelaar was back in the action minutes later, and while his header found the mark, defender Luke Wilkshire was on hand to defuse the situation.

The Dutch continued to pepper their opponents but the Socceroos very nearly stole an historic victory two minutes from full-time when Brett Holman found space in behind the defence only to push his right-foot strike just wide.

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B													
Date & Time			Venue				Weather			Temperature		Attendance	
14th October 2009, 19.30			Etihad Stadium (Docklands Stadium), Melbourne, Victoria				Very good			13C		20595	
Australia..1 v. Oman..0													
half time, Australia..0 v. Oman..0													
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution
START LIST													
1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					26	GK	Ali Abdullah Harib Al-Habsi				
2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					2	DF	Mohamed Rabia Jamaan Al-Noobi				
3	DF	Craig Moore					5	DF	Mohammed Abdullah Mubarak Al-Balushi				
11	DF	Scott Chipperfield					17	DF	Hassan Yousuf Madhafar Al-Gheilani				
4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill	73			89	25	DF	Khalifa Ayil Salim Al-Naufli				
5	MF	Jason Culina					10	MF	Fawzi Bashir Rajab Bait Doorbeen				
7	MF	Brett Emerton					12	MF	Ahmed Mubarak Obaid Al-Mahajiri				86
10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell				79	15	MF	Ismail Sulaiman Ashoor Al-Ajmi				83
16	MF	Carl Valeri				70	21	MF	Ahmed Hadid Thuwaini Al-Mukhaini				
8	FW	Luke Wilkshire					14	FW	Hassan Rabia Suwaidan Al-Housni	89			
9	FW	Joshua "Josh" Kennedy					20	FW	Amad Ali Sulaiman Al-Hosni				
SUBSTITUTES													
14	MF	Brett Holman					1	GK	Mohammed Hawaidi Sulaiman Al-Hooti				
20	DF	David Carney				79	6	MF	Hussain Ali Farah Al-Hadhri				
28	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak				89	8	MF	Badar Mubarak Saleh Al-Maimani				86
75	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo					9	FW	Hashim Saleh Mohammed Al-Balushi				
81	GK	Ante Covic					11	DF	Saad Suhail Juma Al-Mukhaini				
101	MF	Dario Vidosic				70	37	FW	Jaber Mohammed Saghayar Al-Owaisi				
112	DF	Rhys Williams					99	FW	Qasim Said Sanjoor Hardan				
Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					Team Coach		Claude Le Roy				
Team Manager		Gary Moretti					Team Manager		Salah Thuweni Ghulam Al-Araimi				
Referee		Toma Maasaki (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 1		Nagi Toshiyuki (Japan)											
Assistant Referee 2		Otsuka Haruhiro (Japan)											

match report from SBS

Tim Cahill's uncanny radar for goals to save his country arrived on cue once again to salvage the Socceroos' Asian Cup qualification campaign on Wednesday night.

Cahill scored deep in the second half to secure Australia's 1-0 Group B qualifier win over Oman at Etihad Stadium, firing the Socceroos from bottom of the group to equal first.

Cahill's goal was his 18th in 36 internationals and his fifth in his past four Socceroos matches.

His 73rd minute lunged right-foot met a Scott Chipperfield cross to lift Australia into a good position to secure qualification for the 2011 Asian Cup finals with three group games left.

Australia are equal on four points with Oman and also have an identical goal difference to the Asian nation.

The top two teams in the four-team group qualify.

The Socceroos endured a frustrating evening until Cahill struck - combining well in the front third and creating plenty of chances but not being able to land the killer blow.

They also had to survive two excellent opportunities from Oman inside the first 45 minutes.

Busy attacking midfielder Fawzi Basheer had a piledriver from wide on the right turned on to the post by keeper Mark Schwarzer after 22 minutes. And the Omanis should have taken the lead to halftime when striker

Hassan Rabia shot badly wide when through in plenty of space on 25 minutes.

The Socceroos looked impressive going forward with striker Josh Kennedy and Harry Kewell tormenting the Oman defence.

They came closest to a goal just after halftime when skipper Lucas Neill's goalbound shot thumped into Oman goalkeeper Ali Al-Habsi's head on the line and bounced away.

Kennedy forced a good first half save from Al-Habsi as well as heading over in the second, while Kewell's shot just wide was the best Australian chance in the first half.

The Socceroos dodged a late bullet when Chipperfield's clumsy challenge on an Omani opponent inside the box wasn't ruled a penalty.

Australian coach Pim Verbeek paid tribute to Cahill's quality, saying the Everton midfielder's unique gift for bobbing up late in the box for goals was priceless.

"Timmy is special. Sometimes he's invisible in the box and this was a great goal," Verbeek said. "That was not an easy ball but he is so alert with balls like that. He's always there at the right moment."

Oman coach Claude Le Roy did not believe the Socceroos deserved all three points and said he looked forward to the sides' return Asian Cup encounter on November 14 in Muscat.

"They have to make a visit to Muscat and you can be sure we'll be ready," he warned, of a match now likely to decide one of the top two spots in the group.

Asian Cup, Qualifying Round, Group B														
Date & Time			Venue			Weather			Temperature		Attendance			
14th November 2009, 18.00			Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Muscat, Oman			Warm			23C		12000			
Oman..1 v. Australia..2														
half time, Oman..1 v. Australia..1														
No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	No.	Position	Name	Goal (minute)	Yellow Card	Red Card	Time of substitution	
START LIST														
26	GK	Ali Abdullah Harib Al-Habsi					1	GK	Mark Schwarzer					
2	DF	Mohamed Rabia Jamaan Al-Noobi					2	DF	Lucas Neill (c)					
5	DF	Mohammed Abdullah Mubarak Al-Balushi		90+2			3	DF	Craig Moore		40			
17	DF	Hassan Yousuf Madhafar Al-Gheilani					11	DF	Scott Chipperfield					
25	DF	Khalifa Ayil Salim Al-Naufli	16				112	DF	Rhys Williams			15		
10	MF	Fawzi Bashir Rajab Bait Doorbeen					4	MF	Timothy "Tim" Cahill				67	
15	MF	Ismail Sulaiman Ashoor Al-Ajmi					5	MF	Jason Culina					
21	MF	Ahmed Hadid Thuwaini Al-Mukhaini		36			7	MF	Brett Emerton	83				
14	FW	Hassan Rabia Suwaidan Al-Housni				69	10	MF	Harold "Harry" Kewell		17		89	
20	FW	Amad Ali Sulaiman Al-Hosni		26			23	MF	Mark "Marco" Bresciano				67*	
99	FW	Qasim Said Sanjoor Hardan				87	8	FW	Luke Wilkshire	43				
SUBSTITUTES														
1	GK	Mohammed Hawaidi Sulaiman Al-Hooti					14	MF	Brett Holman				67	
6	MF	Hussain Ali Farah Al-Hadhri					20	DF	David Carney		90+2		67*	
8	MF	Badar Mubarak Saleh Al-Maimani					25	FW	Bruce Djite					
9	FW	Hashim Saleh Mohammed Al-Balushi				69	28	MF	Michael "Mile" Jedinak					
11	DF	Saad Suhail Juma Al-Mukhaini					75	DF	Patrick Kisnorbo				89	
19	MF	Ahmed Mana Jamaan Al-Noobi					97	GK	Bradley Jones					
97	FW	Yaqoob Abdul Karim Salim Al-Qasmi				87	101	MF	Dario Vidosic					
Team Coach		Claude Le Roy					Team Coach		Peter (Pim) Verbeek					
Team Manager		Salah Thuweni Ghulam Al-Araimi					Team Manager		Gary Moretti					
Referee		Sun Baojie (People's Republic of China)												
Assistant Referee 1		Liu Qingwei (People's Republic of China)												
Assistant Referee 2		Han Wei (People's Republic of China)												

match report from the AFC

Ten-man Australia battled back from a goal down to beat Oman 2-1 in their fourth match in Group B of the 2011 AFC Asian Cup qualifiers at Sultan Qaboos Complex on Saturday.

Khalifa Ayil put Oman ahead in the 16th minute but Luke Wilkshire levelled two minutes from half-time before Brett Emerton scored the winning goal in the 83rd minute.

Oman showed their attacking intentions straight from the start and had their first chance after only two minutes when Hassan Rabia struck a powerful shot that was deflected wide by the Australian defence.

The hosts continued to dominate and their pressure eventually told after 17 minutes when they were awarded a spot kick after Qasim Said had edged Lucas Neill before sending a cross for Imad Al Hosni, who was fouled inside the area by Rhys Williams.

Williams was dismissed and Ayil stepped up and though his spot kick was saved by Mark Schwarzer, the ball rebounded back to the Al Ittifaq striker and he made no mistake at the second attempt to send the home fans into raptures.

Oman pressed in search of a second and almost added another after 22 minutes when Mohamad Al Balushi headed over the crossbar just three minutes before Tim Cahill then headed into the hands of goalkeeper Ali Al Habsi.

Australia got themselves back into the game in the 43rd minute when Mark Bresciano sent a cross from the right for the unmarked Wilkshire to score. But Oman should have regained the lead less than a minute later when Fawzi Bashir broke down the left side of the area before hitting a powerful shot that bounced off the left upright.

It seemed only a matter of time for Oman to score again and they came close again in the 53rd minute when Rabia's effort from the edge of the area was deflected before Schwarzer made the save.

Six minutes later, Oman had another chance when Imad Al Hosni headed goalwards from a corner but Wilkshire was in the right place to clear the ball off the line.

Al Hosni had another opportunity just after the hour mark but his header was saved by Schwarzer before the Fulham goalkeeper denied Ismail Al Ajmi nine minutes later.

Oman were made to pay for their profligacy as Australia scored the winning goal with seven minutes remaining when Emerton's shot deflected past Al Habsi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Christine (my wife, who despite her health problems but getting better, continues to support my excursions to the NSW State Library)

Apart from copying some match reports from www.ozfootball.net I didn't have to approach anyone for assistance except the agencies listed within.